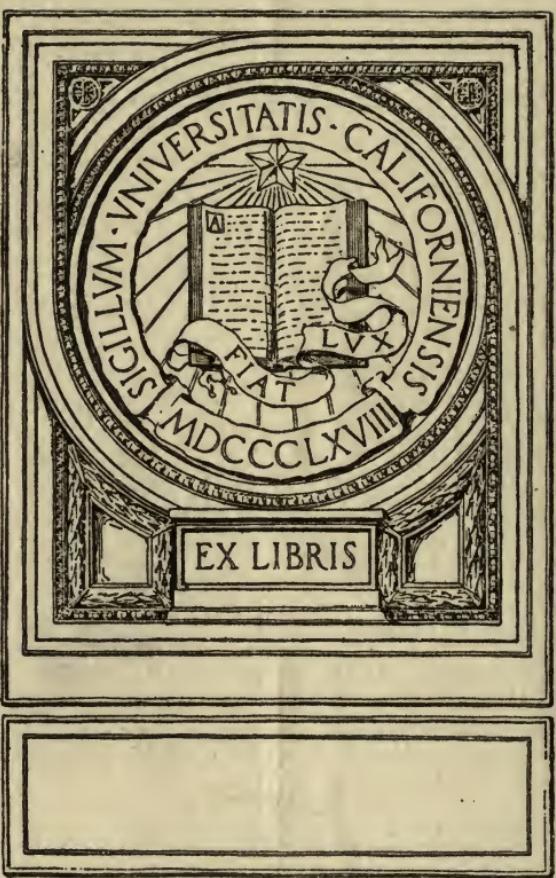


UC-NRLF



#B 531 398

# POLAND'S CASE FOR INDEPENDENCE

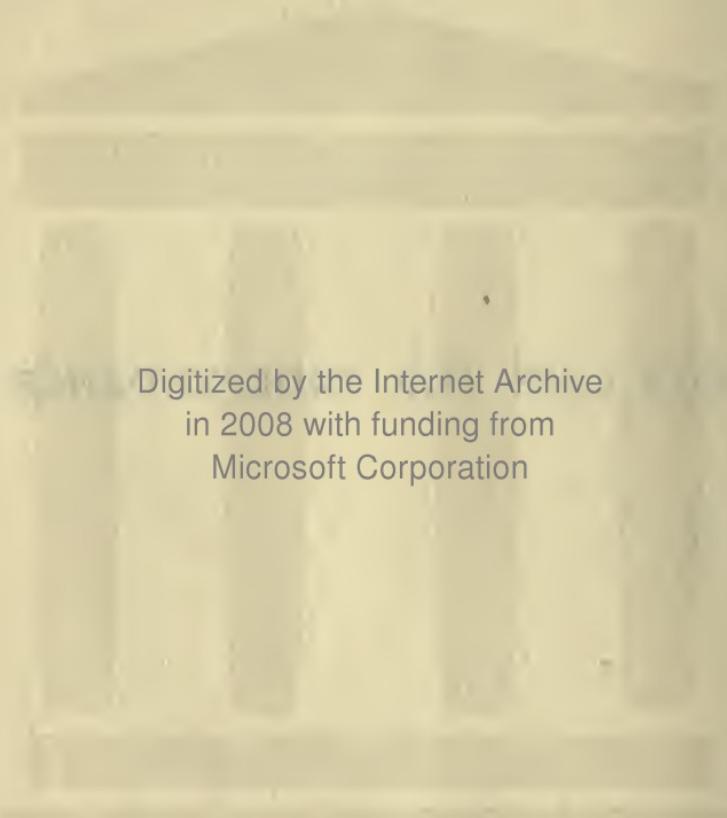






# POLAND'S CASE FOR INDEPENDENCE

POLAND'S CASE FOR INDEPENDENCE



Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2008 with funding from  
Microsoft Corporation

# POLAND'S CASE FOR INDEPENDENCE

BEING

A SERIES OF ESSAYS ILLUSTRATING THE  
CONTINUANCE OF HER NATIONAL LIFE

CHARLES E. BROWN  
CALIFORNIA

NEW YORK  
DODD, MEAD AND COMPANY

DK414-  
PL

# POLAND'S CASE FOR INDEPENDENCE

BY  
THE POLISH INFORMATION COMMITTEE  
WITH THE CO-OPERATION OF  
POLISH EXPERTS FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD

*First published in 1916*

*(All rights reserved)*

THE POLISH  
INFORMATION  
COMMITTEE

*The Polish Information Committee leaves full freedom to  
the authors of the Studies published by it, and thus its  
members do not necessarily endorse the individual views  
of the authors.*

## PREFACE

THE present volume contains a series of essays designed to illustrate the continuance of Polish national life, and to interpret the manifestations of that life to foreigners, and especially to the people of Great Britain. Each of the authors has written his respective study independently ; but, taken together, they present a case which can hardly fail to attract the attention of many readers in many different parts of this country. In this connection the grateful thanks of the Polish Information Committee are due to the distinguished writers who so cheerfully and readily consented to write Prefaces to commend the studies to the British public.

If, as the authors of these successive essays show, Poland succeeds in circumstances of the utmost misfortune and difficulty to manifest and develop to-day the fullness of her national life—if Poland has never ceased to have the hastening of a struggle for the control of her own life, if Poland ranks next after the six Great European Powers in respect of her population, if Poland has a distinctive economic

development, if Poland still counts for something in the history of science, literature, music, and painting—surely these are momentous facts which all the thinking men and women of Great Britain should well weigh and consider.

From the very outset of this Great European War it has begun to be understood that, among the numerous problems which will have to be settled at its conclusion, the Polish question will be of the very utmost importance.

A great part of this gigantic struggle has been waged on Polish land, and aims at the possession of Polish territory. Polish towns have been destroyed, Polish villages burnt, Polish industries ruined, and the remaining remnants of the nation's glorious past have been annihilated. Worst and most deplorable of all, her sons have had to fight against each other in the different armies. Yet, when the day of peace comes and the ministers and diplomats of Europe are gathered round a table to discuss the grave and vital problems of the future, there will be none to represent that Poland which has known famine and devastation, that Poland which has become the cockpit of the East, where innumerable armies have fought and held up the others.

Will Poland suffer because she has not had the control of her own armies? Is force the only

method by which to compel attention in the affairs of nations?

The writers of the succeeding papers do not believe that force is the sole international remedy. They feel that sympathetic knowledge of Polish affairs is an indispensable preliminary to a just settlement, and it is this sympathetic knowledge which, with all recognition of their faults and failings, they endeavour to give within the confines of their studies.

Poland, as will be clear after a study of this book, never ceased struggling and fighting for her independence, even after the days of her disappearance as a separate State. Notwithstanding constant persecutions at the hands of her oppressors, she was still able to develop her economic resources, and to keep pace with other nations, more happily circumstanced, in respect of the development of science, literature, and art.

Does not all this go to show that a country which has manifested such an indestructible vitality, has a right to the independence which she has so strongly craved?

THE POLISH INFORMATION COMMITTEE.



## CONTENTS

	PAGE
LANDMARKS OF POLISH HISTORY. By AUGUST ZALESKI, with an Introduction by DR. R. W. SETON WATSON . . . . .	13
The growth of the Polish State, p. 20—Poland at the height of her development, p. 26—The decline of Poland, p. 30—The beginning of the regeneration and the fall of Poland, p. 36—The temporary recon- struction of an independent Polish State, p. 41—The struggle for liberty, p. 47.	
POLAND'S STRUGGLE FOR INDEPENDENCE. By RAJMUND KUCHARSKI, with a Foreword by LORD WEARDALE . . . . .	57
Partitions of Poland—Polish Legions—Napoleon— Duchy of Warsaw, p. 63—Vienna Congress, p. 66— Kingdom of Poland, p. 69—Constitution—Grand Duke Constantin—Nevossiltzeff—Diets—Struggle for Constitution—Secret Societies—Lukasinski, p. 71— Insurrection of 1830-31, p. 73—Reprisals, p. 75— Polish emigration to Paris—Adam Mickiewicz— Political parties—Prince Czartoryski—J. Lelewel, p. 77—“Democratic Society”—Massacres of 1846 in Galicia, p. 81—Insurrection of 1848—Adam Mickie- wicz's Legion in Italy, p. 82—Principle of Nation- alities—Policy of Napoleon III, p. 85—Wielopolski— Muravieff—Bismarck and Buchanan, p. 92—A Letter of the Archbishop Felinski, p. 94—Reprisals, p. 95— Prophecy of Lammensais, p. 98.	

三

# **LANDMARKS OF POLISH HISTORY**

BY  
**AUGUST ZALESKI**

With an Introduction by  
**R. W. SETON-WATSON, D.Litt.**



## INTRODUCTION

THE Great War has produced a welcome reaction against that indifference towards problems of foreign affairs which was so marked and so regrettable a feature of the past fifteen years. British public opinion was absorbed in the internal affairs of these islands, and often tended to neglect even the greatest of our Imperial problems. European politics were allowed to remain a sealed book; and if this was true even of such near neighbours as France and Germany, it applies with tenfold force to the vast and complicated chain of problems which link up Russia, Austria-Hungary, and the Balkans. The policy of splendid isolation had been abandoned, but despite the growth of a system of ententes, little or no effort was made to break down the attitude of intellectual isolation which had gradually replaced the old traditions of active interest in continental affairs.

Our outlook upon the Polish Question may be regarded as a classical instance of this psychological change. In the early days of last century Poland held an equal place with Greece and Italy in the sympathies of the West, and her tragic fate after the unsuccessful risings of 1830 and 1863

accentuated those sympathies still farther. But in the fifty years which followed there has been a snapping of old sentimental ties, a loss of intercourse, and an almost sepulchral silence. Poland has been almost forgotten, and is only slowly swimming back into our ken, as the result of the ghastly tragedies of a world war. It is fitting that our reviving interest should take the form of humanitarian help ; for the Entente Powers have made the cause of small nations their own, and of these Poland has suffered not less cruelly than Belgium and Serbia. But our interest cannot rest upon a merely humanitarian basis. To-day the Polish Question has once more become one of the keys of the European situation. During the century and a half which have elapsed since the first partition Poland has been in very great measure the determining factor in the relations between Russia, Prussia, and Austria. Prussia, by identifying Russia with herself in holding down the Poles, has created a permanent breach between the two main branches of the Slavonic race, and at the same time maintained and strengthened the community of interests between the two chief exponents of reactionary and non-representative government in Europe. Now that war has rudely severed the main threads which united Berlin to Petrograd, it ought to be possible to restore confidence and friendship between Russians and Poles. It is obvious that real concord in the Slav world is unrealizable unless liberty be accorded to the Poles, and that the estab-

lishment of Russo-Polish amity on sure foundations would be welcomed with enthusiasm by every branch of the Slavonic race. Fortunately, there is a growing perception, among all classes of Russians, of the root-fact that friendship with Germany means the perpetuation of the unnatural feud with Poland and German exploitation of Russian and Pole alike. Equally clear is the corollary that Russia's lasting reconciliation with Poland would deal a death-blow to Germanic influence in Russia, both in the political and in the economic field. The mistakes of the Russian administration in Galicia—now frankly admitted as such in Petrograd and Moscow—and the German conquest of Russian Poland have combined to create a situation to which the old ostrich policy of bureaucratic Russia is obviously incapable of providing a solution.

But if the Polish Question vitally affects Russia and her whole future, it is also of the greatest possible importance for the Western Powers in their struggle against German "kultur." At the eleventh hour British public opinion has suddenly awakened to the significance of Germany's political plan. The realization of the programme of "Berlin-Bagdad" has ceased to be Utopian; it is assuming a concrete form under our very eyes. It involves the creation of a new "Central Europe" (*Mittel-europa*)—a huge State dominated by Germany and subjecting the Poles, Czechs, Slovaks, Magyars, Roumanians, and Southern Slavs to its thrall. The

economic exploitation of Poland, already inaugurated by the German conquerors of Warsaw, would form an essential feature of this scheme.

The Allies are to-day confronted with a stern alternative. Either they must confess themselves beaten and reconcile themselves to a German hegemony over the whole territory which lies between Hamburg and Basra, or they must answer the programme of "Central Europe" by a rival programme, not less practical and more ideal than that of the Germans. The "rights of the smaller nationalities of Europe," more than once publicly advocated by Mr. Asquith in the name of his Government, represent an abstract statement of such a programme; but the phrase is absolutely meaningless unless it is restated to-day in concrete terms of the European situation. The first step towards the creation of a new Europe must be the emancipation and regeneration of the democratic and progressive Slav nations. Free Poland, free Bohemia and Jugoslavia (based on the national unity of Serb, Croat, and Slovene)—side by side with a free Magyar State and an enlarged Roumania—all these will be so many barriers on the path of aggressive Germanism. Without them no barrier is possible; and of them all Poland will be the most powerful, the richest, the best organized, and, with Bohemia, the most highly cultured. With its population of probably not less than twenty millions, in close and intimate alliance with other Slavonic nations, it will take rank in the hierarchy

of nations immediately after the Great Powers. Poland can never be revived in its old historic form as the mistress of other races ; but it has less to fear from a strict application of ethnographic principles than any of its neighbours. The country of Sobieski and Kosciuszko, of Copernicus, Mickiewicz, and Chopin has nothing to fear from the free development of its own destiny, on those lines of self-help, co-operation, and intense patriotism of all classes which have enabled it to survive 120 years of national extinction and foreign oppression.

Mr. Zaleski's brief survey of Polish history forms an admirable introduction to a series whose aim is the interpretation of Poland to British readers, and will be welcomed by all those who have the cause of Slavonic freedom and progress at heart and by the even larger number of those who realize the vital part which the relations of Slav and Briton will play in the future development of Europe.

R. W. SETON-WATSON.

# Landmarks of Polish History

## I

### THE GROWTH OF THE POLISH STATE

THE Polish State had its beginnings in a union of several Slavonic tribes. These combined under the rule of the Piast dynasty to defend themselves against the aggressiveness of the more civilized Holy Roman Empire in the West and the less civilized Northern and Southern tribes. In 964 King Mieczyslaw I married Princess Dombrowka of Bohemia, embraced the Roman Catholic faith, and thereby dealt a severe blow to all his enemies. He destroyed the pretext for German invasions, which had as their aim the conversion of their Eastern neighbours to Christianity ; and at the same time, by getting into touch with the Western world, gained a freer hand in dealing with his other enemies. The eastward movement of the Teutons in the Upper and Middle basin of the Vistula ceased, and it was only in the lower reaches of the river that they later managed to establish themselves in the fourteenth century.

The fact that the Poles and Czechs and Croats joined the Roman Catholic Church had far-reach-

ing results. It divided the Slavonic race into two groups, which developed along different lines. The Czechs and the Poles evolved a civilization essentially of the Western type, while the Southern Slavs, Ruthenians, and Russians embraced the Church of Constantinople and developed along Eastern models. The former followed Rome, the latter Byzantium. This difference remains to this day the basis of the Slavonic Question.

The last King of the Piast dynasty began to transplant Western civilization to that part of Ruthenia which came to him as an inheritance after the death of one of his distant relations, and which is now known as Galicia. Nearly half a century later the young Queen Jadwiga, by her marriage with the Lithuanian Prince Jagiello, determined a similar movement in the North, with the difference that Ruthenia was a member of the Eastern Church when it came under Polish rule, while Lithuania was pagan. In Lithuania, however, the Poles encountered formidable competitors, who, under the pretext of converting the Lithuanians to Christianity, tried to establish their authority over this country by means of the sword. These were the two Teutonic religious orders (Cruciferi and Ensiferi) settled on the shores of the Baltic. They succeeded in overcoming some of the Lithuanian tribes, while the rest were united into one State, and, being strongly pressed from the northwest, advanced in a south-easterly direction, where they subdued the remainder of the Ruthenian

## 22 LANDMARKS OF POLISH HISTORY

Duchies. Thus, by the union with Lithuania, Poland acquired an enormous field for her activity. This field was further extended after the defeats which Polish and Lithuanian forces inflicted repeatedly on the German military Orders. In 1466 the Teutonic Knights of the Cross had to abandon all their possessions on the Baltic with the exception of Eastern Prussia, held by them under the suzerainty of the Polish Crown. The last of the Great Masters of that Order, Albert of Brandenburg, embraced the Protestant religion at the beginning of the sixteenth century, secularized the Order, and proclaimed himself Hereditary Duke of Prussia, whilst remaining a vassal of the Polish Crown. The same fate befell the Knights of the Sword. They ceded to Poland the Province of Livland, retaining that of Courland as vassals. The Jagiellons were also able to establish Polish influence in Bohemia and Hungary, where a younger Prince of that dynasty, Vladislav, was elected King by the Czechs in 1471, and by the Hungarians in 1491. The power of Poland rose to its highest point. The rule of the Jagiellons extended from the Baltic to the Adriatic and the Black Sea.

But military and political power is not the essence of true greatness. Something more is required. A spiritual supremacy means far more than supremacy of the sword. From the time of their adoption of Christianity, the Poles paid special attention to the furtherance of civilization. The Italian missionary and monk brought with him

from the West the first wonders of science. Schools were opened under the influence of the Church. Poles entered into the great family of Western civilization. Early in the thirteenth century this movement was checked for a time by the appearance of the Tartars in Europe ; they vanquished the Eastern Slavs and moved towards the West with all their forces. The Poles broke their advance and threw them back. From that time the Poles were constantly engaged in opposing incursions of Tartars and Turks, and were the acknowledged defenders of Christianity from the Eastern peril. But even the stress of this conflict could not stop the advance of civilization.

From the thirteenth century we hear of many Poles who sought knowledge at the Italian Universities. The scholars brought back not only their quota of knowledge, but new social and political ideas. The fourteenth century marked the approaching end of the Middle Ages. Poland entered on a road of great internal reforms, and theology, philosophy, and the knowledge of classical literature and law advanced quickly. In 1367 a Faculty of Law was opened in Cracow. In 1400 this was transformed into a University with four faculties : theology, philosophy, law, and medicine. While some teachers were brought from abroad, the majority were Poles, and it may be mentioned that many of the latter were derived from the burgesses of Cracow. And the standard of these Polish scientists can be judged from the prominent place

## 24 LANDMARKS OF POLISH HISTORY

they occupied as lawyers and theologians at the Councils of the Church. Numerous students from France, Germany, Hungary, and Italy sought learning in Cracow. The teachers, who had amongst their disciples such men as Copernicus and St. John Kenty, must themselves have been men of no little knowledge. When the University was instituted the Poles fully realized its importance. It served only in part to teach the young. At the time of its opening the Poles had already prominent scientists who, besides lecturing, devoted much of their time to the general advancement of high science. At his inaugural lecture, given in the presence of the King and Queen, the first Chancellor of the University, Peter Wysz, after expressing his thanks to their Majesties, declared that "this University shall stand and fulfil its duty so long as the King of Poland's sceptre is unbroken." It not only justified this hope, but did better. The sceptre was broken, but the University still stands and discharges its task by bringing up new generations of workers, who, in the toil of everyday life, strive for the uplifting of their country.

With the advance of science came a great development of art and literature. Magnificent buildings in the Renaissance style were erected. Much fine work in prose and poetry was published, both in Polish and Latin. Through the constant intercourse with the West, the ideas of the Reformation flowed into Poland, and the new ideas were received with applause both by the nobility and the

burgesses. But the Protestantism of Poland had a somewhat different character from that of Western Europe. The quiet agricultural Polish population did not care much about discussions and quarrels about diverse religious dogmas. What the Poles desired was to keep the religious dogmas, hierarchy, and rituals intact. And the whole movement was rather national than religious. It had as its chief aim the release of the Church from dependence on Rome, and the formation of a Council of Bishops, under the presidency of the King, as the supreme power in religious matters. Owing to the masterful policy of Rome this plan fell through; but the great national movement continued, its chief result being to free Polish literature from an excessive Latin element, and to induce an accentuation of national feeling and a broadening of ideas which were bound up with the Reformation. It may be added that from early times the Poles displayed a natural disposition towards religious tolerance. Ample proof of this can be found in the fact that the Inquisitions, so common in other States, were unknown among them. It has always been a fact that, themselves fervent Catholics, the Poles have not forced their religion on the unwilling. There is a good deal of truth in the assertion that this was one of the many reasons why the Roman religion flourished in Poland and Protestantism lost ground.

## II

### POLAND AT THE HEIGHT OF HER DEVELOPMENT

IN Poland the scientific, literary, and religious movement of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries could not fail to influence political ideas and their bearing on the existing social and political structure of the country. The study of classical philosophers and political writers, modified by the trend of Protestant thought, gave rise to a special school of Polish political philosophers. This was based on two main principles: firstly, the best form of government is a republic; secondly, all men are equal before the law and absolutely free in so far as they act within the limit of that law. These ideas, however, were subject to the same limitation as in the classic republic. Only men of a certain class were accounted full-citizens—namely, the nobility. This principle, however, was applied very differently in Poland as compared with other European countries. Feudalism was unknown. At the outset there was an attempt on the part of the more influential aristocracy to take the government of the country into its hands through the agency of the Crown, but this venture met with stout resistance from the knighthood. The conflict was short. Owing to the stronger position of the knights as defenders of the country, the aristocracy

had even to abandon its special rights and influence and merge into the knighthood. From the coalescence of these two classes the Polish nobility arose. Within it all were equal. There were no titles. The only distinction in rank depended on executive offices, to which any noble could aspire. But the nobility adopted the Aristotelian view of the other classes. Both burgesses and villains were looked upon as citizens without full rights. Their status, however, was much better than that of similar classes in other European countries of the time, excepting England, where, owing to peculiar economic circumstances due to an insular position and the loss of population caused by the Black Death, villainage decayed spontaneously.

While achieving internal equality as nobles, the dominant class was also able to secure for itself rights and privileges which practically placed the government of the country in its hands. By the end of the fifteenth century the Polish Parliament, called in Polish "Sejm," was organized, and, by securing the power of voting supplies and controlling the military service of the Knights became virtually the Government. Parliament consisted of two Chambers: the Upper Chamber or the Senate, composed of higher officials of the State, and the Lower Chamber, consisting of members elected by constituencies. The powers of the King were subject to constitutional limitations. In 1430 the King had to sign an Act ensuring the personal liberty of his subjects, whom he promised never to arrest without fair trial. The maximum of

## 28 LANDMARKS OF POLISH HISTORY

liberty was reached when, after the death of the last Jagiellon King (1572), the throne was made elective, every nobleman having a right to ascend it. The State was called a Republic, and the King's position became that of *Primus inter pares*. These changes were not brought about in a haphazard way ; they resulted from deep thought and scientific inquiries. Even if mistakes were made and eventually produced disastrous consequences, in their time the reforms were the wonder of Europe. The works of such Polish political writers as Goslicki were translated into various European languages, and subsequently suppressed by Governments as dangerously liberal in their outlook. Goslicki's principal work, first published in 1568, was translated into English under the title :—

The counsellor . . . wherein the offices of magistrates, the happie life of subjects, and the felicities of Commonweales is pleasantly and pithlie discoursed. A golden worke, replenished with the chief learning of the most excellent Philosophers and Lawgivers, and not only profitable and verie necessarie for all those that be admitted to the administration of a well-governed Commonweale.

*London, 1598.*

Its purpose can be seen from the opening phrases :—

As every man well knoweth those Commonweales be most blessed where men do live in peace ; so are those countries miserable where people are not maintained in securitie. And as everie Commonweale is happie wherein subjects are good, so in good Commonweales no subject can be unfortunate.

This work was republished in 1607, and a new translation again attempted in 1733 by W. Oldis-

worth. In the preface to the latter issue the translator says that even in his time the work is still looked upon as “advanced,” and tries to safeguard himself against its possible suppression by invoking the protection of many eminent men of the time. He goes on to say :—

There have been many Authors who have written freely of the Office and Duty of a King ; and they have met with Favourable Reception, whilst they kept their Pens within the Bounds of that Deference and Submission, which is due to the Superior Grandeur and Dignity of the Sceptre. Goslicki has with great Delicacy touched upon this Subject. . . .

When the Differences between a British and Polish Government are removed and set aside or amicably compromised and adjusted, what Goslicki hath advanced in Defence of *Loyalty* and *Liberty*, and to make these Two Principles compatible will, I hope deserve the attention of such Patriots, as are alike Zealous for the *Prerogatives* of the Crown, and the *Interests* of the People.

In conclusion, Oldisworth says :—

As the People of Poland have all along been noted for their Great Learning and Knowledge, the Inseparable Companions and Sure Supporters of *Liberty*, so they have in midst of a disadvantageous Soil and Clime always maintained a Character of Dignity and Grandeur ; have often Distinguished themselves by their Wisdom, Bravery, and Conduct ; and at one time particularly in so Glorious a Manner, that they seemed to have Good Claim to the Title of The *Deliverers* of Europe from *Infidelity and Slavery* ; on which account, there is perhaps a good deal of Deference due to them ; and they may well be admitted as Advocates of *That Liberty*, which by their Arms they so bravely Defended ; At least they may expect to be Heard with Patience upon so Agreeable a Subject, by Us, their Constant and Firm Allies, of whom, for our Love of Liberty, they have had so Good an Opinion, that Remote as we are from Them they have more than once attempted to set an Englishman upon the Throne of Poland.

### III

#### THE DECLINE OF POLAND

AFTER the splendid development of Poland in the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries, when that country reached the zenith of her power and won the esteem of Europe, both for her eminence in the arts and sciences and her liberal constitutional and social systems, a decline ensued. It is a commonplace that the essence of good politics is compromise, and a lack of compromise largely accounted for Poland's retrogression. The ideas of liberty put forward so ably by Polish political thinkers of the sixteenth century and carried into practice so admirably at the time began to degenerate in the seventeenth century.

The principle of personal freedom when carried too far may easily lead the way to disintegration ; popular control of the Government under similar conditions may end in an undesirable weakening of the executive. To a citizen of a State so well organized as Great Britain social order in its widest sense seems a necessity to be taken for granted, and it requires an effort of imagination to realize how much careful thought has been expended in adjusting such principles as those of personal free-

dom and supremacy of the State, of popular control and stable government. It is commonly acknowledged by Polish and foreign historians alike that the maladjustment of personal freedom and popular control, on the one hand, and State guidance, on the other, were the chief causes of the internal disruption of Poland during the seventeenth century. The principle of freedom was carried to such excess that every law passed by the Chamber of Deputies required a unanimous vote. A single veto threw out a Bill ! This made legislation by Parliament almost impossible ; the main power passed into the hands of local councils, which became almost autonomous. These councils, called "sejmik," were composed of the local nobility, and began to pass laws special to the area in which they acted without reference to national requirements. This system divided the country into a number of small provinces too loosely connected, and thus greatly diminished the coherence of the State as a whole. As electors of the Kings, the nobles were in a position to curtail the centralized authority until it almost disappeared. The fact that the King could be elected not merely from among the Polish nobility but from one of the foreign royal families, gave foreign monarchs the opportunity to interfere in the internal affairs of the country. Poland became the ground on which France and Austria tried to gain supremacy in Europe by extending their influence, while Russia from the time of Peter the Great had in mind the

annexation of the country. Two other factors tended to weaken Poland. In the first place, the Roman Catholic reaction which affected all Europe in the seventeenth century was very marked in Poland. The admirable laws of the sixteenth century, granting perfect freedom of conscience to all inhabitants of Poland and resulting in an inflow of Protestants from many European countries, were forgotten. Indeed, in 1733 all non-Catholics were deprived of the right of entering Parliament and the Civil Service. The second factor was the limitation of the franchise to the nobility. It cannot be too strongly impressed on the student of Polish affairs that the term "nobility" in Poland connoted a status peculiar to the country. The class of nobles formed by the amalgamation of the aristocracy with the knighthood was very numerous—in fact, it amounted to over 10 per cent. of the population. A franchise limited to this proportion might have been a success in the sixteenth century, for then the prosperity of the Polish bourgeoisie had not been damaged by the nobility, who pursued their agriculture and did not interfere with the traders ; and the burgesses, on their side, were not strong enough to better their position. But when Russia began to export large quantities of corn and so damaged the interests of the Polish gentlemen farmers, the nobility, unable to meet this competition, used their power as a privileged class to free themselves from the burden of taxation and to increase that of the burgesses. This gave

rise to considerable friction, and the strained relations between the classes resulted in oppression.

Simultaneously Poland was engaged in a series of wars. She was subject to constant invasions by Swedes, Moscovites, Turks, and Tartars. So strong, however, was the organization of Poland in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries that all the misgovernment of the subsequent century did not materially weaken her for a time. She withstood all the attacks of the Turks and Tartars of the period, and even proceeded to the rescue of Vienna in 1683, when that city, and with her all Christian Europe, was threatened by a great Mussulman invasion. The coup was so splendid that it won for King John Sobieski, the commander of the army, a fame that is fresh to-day.

All Europe united in his praise. Innumerable books and poems were written in various languages to commemorate this victory, England not being the last to honour the Polish King. Among others, Alexander Tyler published in 1685 a poem extending to 155 pages, in which he gave a full biography of King John III and described his gallant deeds. This is how Tyler began his poem :—

When the whole world of men in Christendom,  
The Eastern Church of Greece, Western of Rome,  
The Orthodox, Reformed, purer Church,  
And all their sev'ral sects lay at the Lurch . . . .  
Then like a mighty Angel sent from Heaven,  
Or like those Cherubims to Eden given,  
With Flaming sword to fence the tree of life,  
Great Sobieski's Hand cut off the strife.

But internal disorder could not remain without effect on the military power of the country, especially as the governing class, fearing an increase of the prerogatives of the Crown, would not vote supplies for the maintenance of an Army, and still clung to the old system of mobilizing the whole nobility in case of war. As an outcome, Poland suffered severe losses. Not only was she deprived of a part of her territory, but also lost her status as a Great Power.

Her territory beyond the Dnieper and Kieff were ceded to Moscow. Sweden took Livland. The rulers of Prussia, Moldavia, and Wallachia, who were vassals of the Polish Crown, refused allegiance; and much against the wish and interests of Poland, the Prussian Prince went so far as to assume the title of King within his territory.

Standing aside from the Thirty Years War, Poland had no influence on the international arrangements adopted at the Conferences of Münster and Osnabrück, and finally established by the Westphalian Treaty. Exhausted by constant wars and misgoverned, she had to endure the arrogance of her former Prussian vassal. Such a state of things could not continue long with a nation like the Poles. In the second quarter of the eighteenth century a strong regenerating movement began. At first this was the work of individual men, but shortly it widened, and by the middle of the century had grown to a great national movement. Sweeping reforms on a democratic basis

were initiated, but unfortunately they came too late. The neighbouring Powers could not but view this revival with disfavour, as it was already their object to dismember the weakened country. As early as 1732 the Courts of Berlin, St. Petersburg, and Vienna signed a convention whereby the high contracting parties made it their business to prevent reforms in Poland. As they could not attain their purpose by diplomacy, they subdued Poland by arms when she was already on the upward path. By this act they not only increased their territory, but destroyed a neighbour, whose liberal and democratic methods might have had a perilous influence on their own autocratically-governed people.

## IV

### THE BEGINNING OF REGENERATION AND THE FALL OF POLAND

THE regenerating movement in Poland was gaining ground when King August III died in 1763. Thus an election was in prospect. Parliament began by introducing reforms to enforce the Executive ; to facilitate the proceedings of the Houses, hampered until then by the need of unanimous decisions ; to improve the position of burgesses and peasants ; to strengthen the economic condition of the country ; and, finally, to increase the military power of the State. Several of these reforms were carried into effect, but the most salient never reached the Statute Book because Prussia and Russia, whose army occupied the chief towns in Poland, wished to ensure the election of Russia's candidate, Stanislas August Poniatowski.

Constant intrigues by the Ambassadors of the neighbouring Powers caused great discontent among the Poles, who started a counter-movement : the Confederation of Bar. This led to much internal disorder, as the King and his party were under Russia's protection, and had no thought of discarding it.

Meanwhile Russia vanquished Turkey, and Austria, intimidated by the victory, drew nearer to Prussia and Turkey in order to cripple Russia.

A remedy was soon found by Prussia. Wishing to use Turkey as an ally against Russia, she proposed that the latter should not make the most of her victory, but take instead a part of Poland, while Austria and Prussia compensated themselves in the same way. All agreed to the proposal, and a formal treaty was signed in February 1772. In August the occupation of the annexed territory was an accomplished fact. The Powers concerned requested the Polish Government to sanction the partition. The King appealed to the Western Powers, but the allied armies speedily occupied Warsaw, and Parliament was coerced by arms to sanction treaties with Austria, Prussia, and Russia, ceding to them the territories which they had previously arranged among themselves to seize.

At the same time Russia inserted a clause in her treaty to the effect that no change of the Polish Constitution should take place without her consent, and to back this policy her Ambassador in Warsaw had a Russian garrison at his disposal. Nevertheless many reforms were initiated and established. In 1778 the so-called Commission of Education was formed, and all business concerning public education fell to it. This was the first Board of Education established in Europe. Its earliest work was to secularize the schools and to reform them on principles laid down by the French philosophers

of the time. Care was also taken to further agriculture, industry, and commerce, the Government assisting those who undertook new enterprises in industry or sought to improve old ones on a sound economic basis and with a reasonable prospect of success. Political reforms were also in preparation. Polish scientists, besides devoting time to the study of social and political questions, entered into touch with such eminent thinkers of the period as Rousseau, Mably, and others ; these latter, on request, wrote treatises on Polish affairs and recommended reforms. Unfortunately, promising reforms could not always be put into practice, as the Russian Ambassador used the treaty against them. In 1787, however, the international situation was greatly changed. Turkey declared war on Russia ; Austria, according to her treaty with Russia, in her turn declared war on Turkey. Profiting by this situation, Sweden broke off diplomatic relations with Russia and began hostilities. England, Holland, and Prussia were ready to back Turkey. The Poles had two roads open to them : to enter into an alliance with Russia and Austria, or to join the other Powers standing by Prussia. King Frederick William II made very profitable offers to Poland, promising her to free her from the influence of Russia. On March 29, 1790, a defensive and offensive treaty was signed between Poland and Prussia, by which each Power was bound to intervene should the other be attacked.

But the international situation speedily changed.

Russia's ally, Joseph II, died, and his successor Leopold, breaking off the alliance with Russia in July 1790, concluded a treaty with Prussia. This weakened the position of Poland, as her alliance with Prussia was no longer of vital importance to the latter. Moreover, in August of the same year, the King of Sweden concluded peace with Russia. Poland felt her insecurity, but continued her constructive work ; to remedy most of the evils of the governmental system a new Constitution was enacted by Parliament and accepted by the King on May 3, 1791. The Throne was made hereditary, the right of *liberum veto* abolished. The position of burgesses and peasants was substantially improved. The Constitution, acknowledged throughout Europe as a model of its kind, won the high appreciation of many scientists and philosophers, among them Edmund Burke. Austria and Prussia joined in the chorus of appreciation, but it was a cause of anxiety in Russia. Shortly afterwards the international situation changed in favour of the last Power. France declared war on Austria. With Austria out of the field, Russia no longer feared Prussia. In May 1792 the Russian Ambassador formally declared war on Poland. But Poland had not had time to carry out reforms under the new Constitution, and was unprepared for war. In accordance with the treaty of 1790, the Polish Envoy at Berlin asked for Prussia's support, but the King answered that he did not consider himself bound to intervene, as Poland had changed her

Constitution without his assent. Poland being practically without an army, Russia entered Warsaw.

Meanwhile between the Courts of Berlin, St. Petersburg, and Vienna negotiations were proceeding for a new partition, but as Austria was occupied with France, Prussia and Russia alone took part in it. The Polish Parliament, meeting at Grodno, was again compelled to sanction the partition. A Russian garrison of thirty thousand men remained in Poland at the disposal of the Russian Ambassador, and the Constitution of 1791 was shelved.

Yet again the Poles resisted. A revolution was proclaimed in Cracow on March 24, 1794, the leadership being placed in the hands of General Tadeusz Kosciuszko. By the promise of liberation of the peasants and their enlistment as volunteers a considerable army was formed, and war declared on Russia. At first the Poles were victorious, but the King of Prussia came to Russia's assistance, and the Poles could not withstand the combination. While hostilities were actually carried on negotiations for a third partition proceeded. A treaty was signed between Austria, Prussia, and Russia in January 1795. On November 25th of the same year King Stanislas August was forced to abdicate. The three participating Powers believed that now the Polish Question was finally settled. They were to learn however, that they had become masters of a race whose individuality could not be killed.

## V.

## THE TEMPORARY RECONSTRUCTION OF AN INDEPENDENT POLISH STATE

By the 1795 partition the ancient Polish State was brought to an end. The territory of a once-flourishing Republic was divided among her three neighbours. Russia annexed the Lithuanian and Ruthenian provinces, while the territory forming ethnographical Poland was unequally divided between Austria and Prussia, the latter taking the largest share, with Warsaw, the capital of the country.

Immediately after the three Powers, in the words of Frederick, "partook and communicated of the body of Poland," a fact which, in his opinion, would bind the countries in an eternal friendship, the Prussian Government sought to destroy everything Polish. Even the old names of districts were replaced by German ones, the areas of New East Prussia and New Silesia being constituted. Further, the Government introduced Prussian administration, suspended Polish laws, forced the German language on all State institutions; also it removed Poles from all official positions, and in general prevented their participation in public affairs. Briefly, the

people were subjected to the regime of the Prussian bureaucracy. The property of the Church was seized by the Treasury. The great improvements made in the position of the peasantry during the last years of independence were abolished, their status being reduced to the Prussian standard. Similar methods were adopted in the Austrian part, called now the Kingdom of Galicia and Lodomeria.

In Russian Poland Catherine II confiscated many estates, and proved anything but a friend to the Church. Her successors, however, the Emperors Paul and Alexander I, were less arbitrary in their methods. The latter discountenanced harsh treatment of the Poles, for some time at any rate. He entrusted the supervision of education among them to a Pole, Prince Adam Czartoryski, who introduced a system based on the principles laid down by the Polish Parliament before the dismemberment.

But the daily struggle against Austrian and Prussian schemes did not occupy the whole attention of the Poles. They were busily engaged in forming plans for the reconstitution of their country as a sovereign State. There were two possibilities open to them at the moment: they could turn towards Russia or France. The kindly disposition of Alexander I towards the Poles made them hope that he would be willing to reconstruct Poland as an independent kingdom under his rule. The project was laid before the Czar by Prince Czartoryski. The Czar hesitated for some time, but

unfortunately accepted advice tendered by the King of Prussia, and rejected the proposal. All the hopes of Poland now turned towards France, where a good many Polish emigrants found shelter, and from whence the message of liberty had gone forth to all Europe. The Poles in France had organized legions of their countrymen, and these fought side by side with the French.

In 1806, when the King of Prussia declared war on France, Napoleon decided to avail himself of the services of the Poles. He proclaimed the independence of Poland as the chief aim of his campaign, and called for an insurrection in that country. The Poles took to arms, Napoleon was victorious, and by the following Treaty of Tilsit an independent Polish State once more appeared on the map of Europe. But the Powers which took part in the division of Poland used all their influence to prevent the new State from retaining its name. Thus the Duchy of Warsaw was set up, and consisted of no more than a part of Prussian Poland. All the Baltic coast, with the exception of Dantzig, now made a free city, went to Prussia, while the district of Bialystok was handed to the Czar by way of compensation.

The Duchy of Warsaw was given as an hereditary possession to the King of Saxony by Napoleon, who granted it an ostensibly liberal Constitution, which ensured religious toleration, the equality of all citizens in the eyes of the law, the use of the national language, a two-chamber Legislature with

a Ministry responsible to it, and an army of fifty thousand.

The creation of a small Duchy inevitably failed to satisfy the Poles. Moreover, its Constitution was in reality very unsatisfactory. The franchise was very limited, personal liberty was not guaranteed, and there was no freedom of the Press; and though emancipation of the peasants was a feature, no provision was made for their subsistence, so that they remained essentially dependent on the landowners. Again, the Poles understood that Napoleon created the Duchy for his own purposes, and therefore did not feel safe against some new turn of his policy. Notwithstanding all this, the Duchy represented a great improvement on the conditions to which the Poles were subjected prior to its creation. At once the huge task of organizing the country was started, and once more the Poles showed their characteristic vitality. They paid special attention to economic development and education. But the new order of things had scarcely been established when Austria declared war on Napoleon in 1809. Simultaneously the Austrian armies crossed the frontier of the Duchy. The Archduke Ferdinand, commanding the Austrian army, declared that he was entering the Duchy not as an enemy, but as the liberator of Poland from French rule. The Poles, however, effectively opposed the "liberator," and when hostilities were ended found themselves in the possession of a great part of Austrian Poland. In the peace negotia-

tions, conducted in Vienna, however, Napoleon was actuated by the same motives as at Tilsit. The Emperor Alexander, Napoleon's ally at the time, particularly feared the success of that ally, since he had no wish to see Poland under the House of Saxony. Finally an agreement was reached by the two allies, under which the Duchy attached a part of Austrian Poland. The Czar was compensated by the cession to him of the Tarnopol district, Napoleon promising that he would keep the Duchy to the limits described at the time. On their side, the Poles hoped that the Franco-Russian Alliance would prove transient, and meanwhile were busily engaged on the internal organization. Very soon their hopes were fulfilled by the crisis of 1812. Both Alexander and Napoleon made handsome promises, but the Poles were bound by treaty and gratitude to France ; their forces joined Napoleon's great army, and suffered defeat with it. Austria and Prussia, the two other allies of Napoleon in this adventure, turned round and joined the victorious Czar. Again offers and promises were made to the Poles, but for them treaties were not mere scraps of paper, and they stood to the last by France. Perhaps they would have profited more by imitating Austria and Prussia. Be that as it may, they honoured their bond.

So, having linked its fate with Napoleon's, the Duchy of Warsaw was at the disposal of the Congress of Vienna. During the Congress the Polish Question became a source of misunderstanding

between Russia, Prussia, and Austria. A European war was imminent, but the return of Napoleon forced the Powers to settle their differences. A settlement was reached by a new partition of Poland. From a part of the Warsaw Duchy the Grand Duchy of Posen was formed and given to the King of Prussia, to whom also the free city of Dantzig returned. Cracow and a small strip of territory round it was declared a free Republic under the protection of Russia, Austria, and Prussia. Austria received again the Kingdom of Galicia and Lodomeria. The remainder of the Duchy constituted the Kingdom of Poland, and was given to the Czar of Russia.

## VI

### THE STRUGGLE FOR LIBERTY

THE Congress of Vienna laid down in a very vague way the principle that all parts of Poland should receive a Constitution compatible with a normal national development.

In order to comply with this principle the Emperor of Austria established, in the part of Poland which came under his rule, a sham Parliament, composed entirely of the clergy and the wealthiest nobles. This body had no legislative rights ; its only business was to apportion taxes and write petitions asking the Sovereign to make laws. Coincidentally, the bureaucratic system in existence before the loss of the Polish provinces (1809) was reinforced ; its object was to set class against class and so weaken national unity.

The Prussian Government, as usual, made no pretence of discharging its obligations to the Congress. The treaty was ignored and a system of bureaucratic persecutions begun without ceremony.

The Emperor Alexander alone acted in accordance with the intentions of the Congress, and granted a fairly liberal Constitution. The Kingdom of Poland was definitely bound to Russia by

the fact that the Czar was the hereditary ruler, but nevertheless it had its own Parliament and Executive and a separate army and administration ; its foreign policy alone was purely Russian. The Russian Government and military caste were very dissatisfied with Alexander's liberalism towards a conquered nation, an attitude hardly surprising when it is considered that Russia did not enjoy the same benefits. Pressure was brought to bear on the Czar by his Court, and eventually this influence told—partly, no doubt, because Alexander meanwhile discovered that it was difficult for the autocratic Czar of Russia to submit to the limitations of a constitutional Kingship in Poland. Like others of his time, he found that liberal principles were one thing, liberal practice another. Consequently a systematic infringement of the Polish Constitution was permitted at the hands of his brother, the Tsarevitch Constantine, the Viceroy Prince Zajonczek, and the Imperial Commissioner Novosiltzev. Little by little the legalized rights of the people were annulled. Censorship of the Press and other publications began. Secret police made many arrests. Parliament was not convoked. And all these reactionary measures were increased when the Emperor Nicholas I succeeded to the throne. The Poles, unable to retain the management of State affairs by constitutional means, took to arms. Revolution broke out on November 29, 1830. Not feeling strong enough to sustain the Revolution alone, the Poles sought in vain for foreign help ;

Austria, not satisfied to stand aside from the insurrection, closed her frontiers and made communication with the West difficult. Prussia entered into treaty with Russia, promising to put sixty thousand troops at her disposal. The Revolution collapsed, but not without having a great effect elsewhere. Owing to the Polish rising the Czar could not go to stamp out the Revolution in Belgium, as was his intention. It may therefore be said that Poland saved Belgium by her revolt.

After suppressing the Revolution, the Russian Government's attitude towards Poland hardened. The Constitution was suspended, the national Polish army abolished, and the administration of the country subjected to the central authorities at St. Petersburg. Also State lands were distributed amongst officers and officials in order to russify the country. Many Poles were sent to Siberia. The Uniat Church was abolished and its followers forced to become Orthodox. The Polish Universities at Warsaw and Vilna were closed and schools reduced in number, with the apparent object of minimizing Western influence.

To escape these conditions many Poles emigrated to France and England, where they were sympathetically received. Still, the whole thought of the people was centred in a single idea: the reconstitution of Poland. Whatever differences of opinion existed on social problems were merged in this common desire. A revolt was planned and prepared in 1846. No outbreak took place in the

Duchy of Posen, because there the organizers were already in the hands of Prussian gaolers, but Cracow rose and Galicia made ready. The attempt, however, ended disastrously, for the Galician peasants were used by the Austrian Government against the insurgents.

During the previous few decades the system of the Austrian Government had been to demoralize the peasants and awaken in them a hatred of their landlords. The Austrian law maintained the right of landlords to labour dues, forced on the squires the duty of apportioning taxes, and made the latter select recruits for the army and act as rural police. No better means could have been employed to sap the popularity of the landed classes among the peasantry. On the other hand, the bureaucracy took the peasants under their care, protecting them whenever they were prosecuted by the landlords for theft, and so forth. The ignorant poor failed to realize the object of this system. To them all oppression originated with landlords, while the bureaucracy figured as defenders of the weak. Hence, when the revolt against Austrian rule began, nothing was easier than to persuade the peasant that a victory of the insurgents would leave them at the mercy of landlordism. Criminals were let loose from prisons to start riots, and the peasantry accepted the lead. Many nobles were massacred with their wives and children, some two thousand persons being killed. This ended the rising. The Revolutionary authorities fled from Cracow, which

was occupied by a garrison composed of Austrians, Prussians, and Russians. In all parts of Poland the gaols were filled with prisoners suspected of sympathizing with the insurgents. The free city of Cracow, instituted at the Congress of Vienna, was absorbed by Austria.

The severity of the measures directed against the Galician rising left the Poles undaunted, as the wider revolutionary movements of 1848 showed. The Prussian revolutionists requested the Government to grant internal autonomy to the Duchy of Posen, and having apparently obtained for themselves a liberal Constitution, clamoured for war with Russia as a means of extending this liberty. Frederick William solemnly promised to fulfil their wishes. The Poles were allowed to raise their own army for service against Russia, and at once set to work. But as soon as Berlin was in hand Frederick availed himself of the privilege, always claimed by the Prussian Kings, of breaking his word. He ordered his troops to fall on the Polish camps and to massacre the young men who were trained there to fight in his name.

The revolution in Austria followed a similar course, so far as the Poles were concerned. Promises were lavishly made, reforms initiated ; but when the position in Vienna became secure Galicia was drowned in blood.

In this way all Poland suffered severe reprisals, under which the nation seemed to be losing its identity. But the quiet of that time covered a ceaseless

activity. Unobtrusive development took the place of resistance ; science, literature, and art flourished ; the people, unbroken, were preparing to assert again their right to nationality. It was not, however, until Napoleon III introduced the principle of racial unity into European politics that the Poles found an opportunity. An armed insurrection started at Warsaw in 1863. The hopes of the insurgents centred in Napoleon, who, after the victories of Magenta and Solferino, was regarded in Poland as the champion of the oppressed. But Napoleon was absorbed in home affairs and, acting with Great Britain and Austria, limited his action to the presentation of pacific notes to Russia. The resulting diplomatic correspondence dragged on while the insurrection was being stamped out by force. A period of civil suppression followed. What remained of self-government disappeared, the Poles lost the right of entering the Civil Service, and the Russian language was introduced into the schools and courts. Everything Polish was prohibited, the very name of the country being changed to "The District of the Vistula."

The Prussian Government took similar measures, and enforced them with German ruthlessness. In 1886 a Colonization Commission was constituted in Posen to push the purchase and settlement of the land by Germans. A hundred million marks were made over to the Commission by the Government for this purpose. In addition, in 1894, Bismarck's influence led to the formation of a

Society for the Germanization of the Duchy of Posen. Three Prussians, Hennemann, Kennemann, and Tiedemann, organized this body, which, in keeping with their initials, was called the Hakata. It started work by fomenting German national feeling in Prussia and Posen. Not content with the fact that the Government deprived the Poles of the right to enter the Civil Service—even, indeed, to fill such a post as that of porter at a Government railway-station—the Hakata began a boycott of Polish merchants, artisans, doctors, lawyers, etc. Some years later the Prussian Diet voted another hundred million marks to the Colonization Commission for the acquisition of land. The Poles were forbidden to build new premises of any kind without a special permit. Many Polish towns and villages received German names. Children in schools were punished for speaking Polish. The language was also forbidden at public meetings. Finally, the Prussian Diet passed a law for depriving Poles of their land if it were required for German immigrants.

The Poles protested through their representatives in the Prussian Diet and the Imperial Parliament, but could make no headway; most of the German representatives replied in effect with Bismarck's war cry, "Ausrotten."

Under Austrian rule the Poles fared differently. The defeat of 1866 left the Austrian bureaucracy bankrupt. The inefficiency of her administration was obvious, and the oppressed nationalities of the

Empire regarded the central Government as too weak to maintain its supremacy. So-called Fundamental Statutes proclaimed by the Emperor accorded a Constitution, based on the autonomy of the divers countries and the equality of all nationalities. Galicia received a separate Diet, which decided matters of local importance. Polish became the official language of the country, although in Eastern Galicia Ruthenian was equally recognized. The usual constitutional liberties were granted. There were two Polish Universities, in Cracow and Lemberg, and an Academy of Science was opened in the former city. Primary and secondary education was entrusted to the Polish authorities and Poles were admitted to all Government appointments.

Such is, in brief, the history of the rise and fall of Poland. Her fate is that of a nation who attempted to practise democracy while the rest of Europe was largely autocratic in Government and had not entirely thrown off the traditions of feudalism. Much has been said of internal dissensions which shook Poland in her free days ; but is it not a fact that even now advances in democracy mean internal conflict ? The democratic system was persisted with and failed—because continental Europe was not ripe for it. And so it was that Poland paid very dearly for her love of internal freedom. Surely it is a stain on the world's history that this nation and its plight should

have been forgotten for the best part of a century. But Poland sees her opportunity at last and knows that what is made of it depends largely on those who will be called upon to settle the boundaries of European States after the present tremendous struggle. Unfortunately, she is hidden away—surrounded by great States. These States form a barrier across which her voice does not easily travel. The tragedy of war waged on her territory has again brought the Polish Question to the front. The Poles hope that from the tumult of the world's struggle a united and independent Poland will emerge.



# **POLAND'S STRUGGLE FOR INDEPENDENCE**

BY  
**RAJMUND KUCHARSKI**

**With a Foreword by  
LORD WEARDALE**



## FOREWORD

THE history of Poland, during the last two centuries, forms one of the saddest records of the gradual disintegration, subjection, and humiliation of a great and gifted people. The first half of that period presents but a long chapter of foreign intrigue and continued interference with the domestic concerns of Poland and the persistent aggression of jealous and powerful neighbours, leading up to the flagitious partitions and eventual complete destruction of its national existence.

The work of Mr. Rajmund Kucharski, upon which I do not propose to offer either comment or criticism, takes up the story at a point when hope of emancipation from alien domination had once more vainly revived in Polish hearts.

The Emperor Alexander I, during that short spasm of liberal enthusiasm with which he inaugurated his reign, had held out to the Poles the promise of a renewed political existence, but too soon, alas! other counsels had prevailed, and again the curtain descended upon all those fair anticipations to which it had given birth. Recent events have brought the Polish question into special prominence. It has to-day become one of absorb-

ing moment, and out of the embers of the present worldwide conflagration the friends of freedom will strive for that of Poland to be at length restored.

It is a strange reflection that Germany, who had herself for centuries suffered from internal divisions, and whose unity was only in 1870 finally accomplished, should have been the most formidable obstacle to the re-establishment of Polish independence. It was a dogma of Prince Bismarck that its recognition was inconsistent with the safety of the German Empire, and in the polemical discussion now going on in the Teutonic Press there is apparently a general agreement with this conclusion. In none of the various proposals for the settlement of the Polish question does German public opinion concede to twenty millions of Poles those national and racial rights which they contend for with undeniable justice for themselves.

And yet how strong everywhere has proved the spirit of race and nationality! Centuries of oppression in all countries and in every clime have ever failed to destroy it. The German people are themselves a striking illustration of its overpowering force, while Hungary is a vivid illustration of its undying potency. But Poland in the eyes of these blind and wrangling disputants is to be ruled altogether outside the scope of its operation. In the multitude of schemes which have been promulgated in German lands every variety of annexation, redivision, and alien form of government is

suggested ; but nowhere is the claim of freedom or the independence of Poland set forth by these apostles of the new Kultur and the regeneration of the world.

The Polish race has many gifts, but perhaps its enduring faith is its most remarkable characteristic. No oppression kills it at home, whatever the weapons or the arts of the oppressor, while absence from the Fatherland has not dimmed its courage in the great Polish settlements in the United States of America or elsewhere. It may be that its long record of sorrows will have brought home to Polish minds in all these years of tribulation and exile some salutary warnings ; for it is unquestionable that many of their misfortunes in the past were due to the cleavage which too long existed between the Poles themselves and in the unhappy feud between the owners and the tillers of the soil, which was the certain parent of internal strife and the specious excuse for repeated intervention. It is also true that conditions in Poland have been greatly changed by recent developments, and the enormous growth of the industrial towns and districts has perhaps accentuated these traditional difficulties and given greater prominence to the demands of the proletariat. But the reconstitution of Poland, if it is to be successfully attained, must be based upon a frank acceptance of democratic ideals and the cordial co-operation of all classes in the re-establishment of their national life. Without complete unity of purpose

the prospect of Poland's emancipation will be small indeed, and in this supreme moment one thought should dominate every other: the call of patriotism to every Pole to merge all differences of opinion in the concerted effort to secure the liberation of his country and the restoration of his existence as a nation.

The Polish Information Committee have embarked upon a most meritorious campaign of popular enlightenment; and I venture to affirm that the more the history of their country is studied and reflected upon the stronger will be the conclusion that the only final solution is to be found in the recognition of the rights and aspirations of Poland, and that the great empires in the midst of which it is fated to remain geographically embedded will sooner or later end by admitting that in the freedom of Poland will reside their own surest safeguard.

WEARDALE.

May 5, 1916.

## POLAND'S STRUGGLE FOR INDEPENDENCE

The Poles will never allow themselves to be engulfed by the foreigner so long as their memory remains faithful to liberty and they accept the word in its widest sense ; so long as they continue to seek knowledge and, by renouncing frivolities and trifles, hold themselves in readiness for any eventuality. They will not find their salvation in idle boasts and thoughtless enthusiasms, nor in the hope that some one will come to their aid.—HUGO KOLLONTAY.

“THE second partition of Poland,” says Albert Sorel, “was contemporaneous with the first coalition formed against France ; indeed, it was almost its necessary condition. The compact then concluded between the Allies had as a secret corollary a plan for the partition of France to their profit.” Happily this proved no more than an evil dream. Poland alone became the victim. Poland alone was despoiled, torn asunder, thrust from her place among the nations of Europe. Yet her soul survived, and, ever seeking the fulfilment of her aspirations, found a fresh outlet for the enthusiasm of her sons. Secretly escaping by way of the open frontiers on the west, they enrolled themselves as volunteers under the leadership of Dombrowski. Fighting for the glory of the French Republic, they dreamed that out of the agonies of the battlefields of Italy.

and Germany would be brought forth anew the Kingdom of Poland. The star of France and of Napoleon was to guide them to their promised land.

Vain dreams ! Napoleon, engaged in a war against Prussia and Austria, conceived the idea of stirring up to revolt the newly made subjects of these Powers. Under his orders Dombrowski and Wybicki published a proclamation addressed to the Poles, while he himself travelled through Posen and entered Warsaw, where the French troops were received with enthusiasm. When, however, the Treaty of Tilsit came to be signed, the name of Poland was not even mentioned. Napoleon believed he had need of Alexander to make the success of his schemes certain and feared to disclose plans of so opposite a nature to one of the beneficiaries in the partition. Yet he felt he owed some sort of compensation to the deluded Poles, and founded for them a little State—the Duchy of Warsaw. They could but accept this as an earnest of their great desire. What could their State do but give all that was asked of her—recruits, and still more recruits ? Her army was at first limited to 30,000 men, but the figure was doubled ; and later still, taxing her strength to the utmost to support this heavy burden, she gave, in January, 1812, 65,000 men ; in November 97,000. Joseph Poniatowski linked his fate with that of the Emperor, becoming a national hero and the idol of the Polish soldiers. He perished with the remnant of the Polish army in the battle of Leipsic—the last of Poland's knights.

The Duchy received from Napoleon a Constitution modelled on that of France and the Napoleonic Code. De Montallivet in his "Exposé de la situation de l'Empire," on December 1, 1809, said : "It would have been easy for the Emperor to unite the whole of Galicia to the Duchy of Warsaw. He did not wish to do anything, however, to arouse fears in the mind of his Ally, the Emperor of Russia. . . . His Majesty had never contemplated the re-establishment of the Kingdom of Poland." On October 20, 1809, M. de Champagny, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, wrote in an official note : "The Emperor not only wishes to do nothing which will encourage the idea of the rebirth of Poland, but he is disposed to join with the Emperor Alexander in doing everything tending to efface her memory from the hearts of her aforetime subjects. His Majesty wishes that the names 'Poland' and 'Pole' should disappear, not only from all political transactions, but also from the pages of history."

Kosciuszko, the great hero of 1794, never had any confidence in the promises made in Berlin in 1806. He remained quiescent during the whole time the Duchy was in existence, hoping, longing, watching for the ray of light which would soon, he believed, regild the ancient shield of national independence. He went to the Congress of Vienna ; he exhorted Alexander ; he reminded him of his promises—and death spared him the bitter knowledge of blasted hopes.

On February 18, 1813, the Russians entered

Warsaw in pursuit of the French army, and those who had based their hopes on Alexander felt that here was their opportunity. Prince Czartoryski, friend and minister of the Emperor of Russia, reopened the negotiations first set on foot in 1806, to receive once more the assurance that the Tsar had not abandoned his favourite scheme for the restoration of Poland. Replying to a letter of Kosciuszko, he said to that veteran: "I hope to bring about the regeneration of your brave nation. . . . To that end I have taken a solemn oath. . . . Very soon the Poles will recover their fatherland and their name." After reviewing the remnant of the Polish army on the plain of St. Denis, he said to the Polish officers: "Sirs, we have learnt to admire you on the field of battle. That hostility which has too long endured between the two nations should sunder them no longer. I love and esteem your country: you do well to recall her children to her from among the nations. You deserve to be happy. To attain that end I will employ all the power that God has given me."

In December 1814 the Grand Duke Constantin issued a proclamation to the Polish troops: "His Majesty, the Emperor Alexander, calls you! Arm yourselves to defend your fatherland and to maintain your political existence!"

Fredéric Gentz, one of the principal actors in that Vanity Fair, the Congress of Vienna, said: "Those who, at the time of the Congress, were able to recognize the precise nature of its objects

could have no illusions as to its result. The reconstruction of the social order, the regeneration of the political system of Europe, the establishment of a just and abiding peace—high-flown phrases such as these were declaimed to satisfy the people's ears, to give dignity and grandeur to this solemn assembly. The real result of the Congress, however, was the distribution of the spoils among the conquerors."

The question of Poland was discussed among others. Much was said. Poland had been seized—the whole world wished to see her free. But Hardenberg (Prussia) asked for a part of the Duchy on behalf of his master. Nesselrode, in his turn, claimed the whole of it for Russia. Metternich declared that the Duchy had not been conquered by the Russians alone; that the Austrian armies had assisted in the struggle; that they could not concede the right to Russia to indemnify herself thus, especially, in the face of the Tsar's declaration that it should not be treated as a conquered country. He asserted that he could not give up the provinces which had formed a part of Austria, and that in any case the revival of the name of Poland would be a peril in itself and a direct contravention of all the treaties. Hardenberg vociferated that Prussia certainly would not consent to the restoration of Poland. Castlereagh, on the other hand, said that the restoration of the country would meet with the approval of the English Parliament, but only on condition of its complete

independence. A Poland curbed and subordinated to Russia, a vassal State, could not be tolerated.

In a celebrated conversation between Alexander and Talleyrand, there was some interesting word play between the two accomplished diplomatists. "At Paris," began the Tsar, "you believe in a Kingdom of Poland. How is it that you have changed your mind?" "My mind, sire," replied Talleyrand, "is still the same. At Paris we only thought of the restoration of the whole of Poland. I believed then, as I believe now, in her independence—but to-day you speak of quite a different question. . . ." Then Alexander made answer: "I have two hundred thousand men in the Duchy of Warsaw. Would you take them away from me? I have nothing to do with your international law. I don't know what it means. What do you think I care for all your parchments and all your treaties?"<sup>1</sup>

Once again the result for Poland was a partition. Austria took districts of Eastern Galicia, ceded to the Grand Duchy of Warsaw in 1809 and 1810, giving up Western Galicia, which she had possessed from 1795 to 1809. Prussia gave up that part of Poland constituted as the Duchy of Warsaw in 1807, except those territories known henceforth under the name of the Grand Duchy of Posen. Prussia and Austria recognized the Constitution of the Kingdom of Poland, having a distinct administration, but owning the Emperor of Russia as Sovereign. Cracow became a free neutral town.

<sup>1</sup> "Mémoires de Talleyrand" (Broglie edition), vol. ii. p. 392-3.

Thus the new State of Poland was formed, under the title of the Kingdom of the Congress. It consisted of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, reft of its provinces of Posen and Gniezno ; of the Galician territories ; of the town of Cracow and its environs—in short, it was a Poland shorn of two and a half millions of Poles !

The related clauses contained in the Treaty of Vienna are very interesting. They provided for a free Constitution, a distinct administration, and an “interior extension”—a phrase which has been taken to mean the expansion of the autonomy of Poland over the Lithuanian provinces ; among the Poles it roused a feeling of gratitude so general and deep that the veteran Kosciuszko wrote to the Emperor dedicating the rest of his life to his service.

On November 27th Alexander signed the new Constitution at Warsaw. Liberty seemed its keynote. Liberty of the press, liberty for the individual, liberties of all kinds were promised. All the Acts passed were to be in Polish ; all the officials were to be Poles ; so, too, should be the Council of State, composed of all the ministers, assisted by an Imperial Commissioner, Novossiltzoff. The command of the troops was to be entrusted to the Grand Duke Constantin.

This man, one of the two Russians directly concerned in the administration of the country, was moved by violent impulses, unreasoning and brutal, often seemingly mad ; but at the same time he was capable of noble sentiments and national

ideas. He hated the country, its inhabitants, and, above all, its Constitution. Yet, running counter to all the prejudices of such a nature as his, even against his will, irresistible attractions drew him to civilized Poland and its womenkind. He was scarcely installed at Warsaw when Czartoryski wrote to the Emperor: "He heaps ridicule on all law and order. . . . He even wishes to rule the army by the might of his arm." Before long the soldiers began to desert; many officers resigned or committed suicide. But the gloomy Novossiltzoff, the old friend of Alexander, was there to watch over the kingdom, and once more the idea of a Poland reunited to Russia came into existence when he began to organize at Warsaw a secret service police, and covered Poland and Lithuania with a network of spies. The cost of this police service reached 500,000 Polish florins yearly.

The Poles now demanded that the Constitution to which they had sworn allegiance should be faithfully carried out into practice. Deceived in its legitimate hopes, the nation defended itself by the creation of secret societies. These societies were so little revolutionary that they included in their membership many soldiers of high rank, such as Lieutenant-Colonels Krzyzanowski and Pradzynski and Major Walerian Lukasinski. At Vilna there flourished a society called the "Philaretos," which numbered among its members the future national poet Adam Mickiewicz.

One of the most noble characters of this time,

Lukasinski, a hero of Plutarch, represents the very incarnation of Poland's soul. Thrown into the dungeons of Warsaw by Novossiltzoff after the flight of Constantin, he was a little later chained to a cannon and dragged through the plains of Russia, only to be thrust into the dark cave of Schlisselburg ; there he suffered for thirty-eight long years, losing sight and hearing, and there he died.

At the opening of the first Diet of the kingdom in 1818, Alexander, speaking in French, said : " You have given me the opportunity of showing to my country what I have long been preparing for her. . . ." This was regarded as the forecast of a Constitution for the Russian Empire, but the hope was built on sand.

Soon the atmosphere of the Diet became insupportable. Supporters of the Constitution were subjected to persecution. Alexander, speaking through his minister, made it known that, as the author of the Constitution, he alone could interpret it ; and having made his attitude on this point clear, he did not again convene the Diet. In 1825 its proceedings were secret, except for the opening and closing sittings. Then the brothers Niemojowski, the principal constitutionalists of the kingdom, were arrested and their election quashed, the right of electing deputies for the palatinate of Kalisz was suppressed, and the work of the Diet became the business of the ministers alone.

After the death of Alexander a revolution under the *aegis* of the " Decembrists " broke out in

Petersburg. The new Emperor, Nicolas, instituted a Commission of Inquiry, and it was discovered that the National Patriotic Society had been for a short time in correspondence with visionaries among the Russian nobles. Still, Novossiltzoff's efforts were not very productive, since only eight persons appeared before the High Court ; and even they were acquitted after long detention, except one condemned to criminal punishment for his refusal to reveal the Russian plot. Nicolas "promised and swore before God" to observe the Act of Constitution.

But after the death of the viceroy Zajaczek in 1826, against the letter of the Constitution he combined, in the person of his brother-in-law Constantin, the two offices of Lieutenant of the Kingdom and Commander-in-Chief of the Army. Constantin had no use for the Diet. "The tongues will begin to wag again," he said. "They shall be cut."

The Diet was summoned for May 20, 1830. Nicolas, who, like his predecessor, disliked the Napoleonic Code, looking on the conqueror himself as the satanic offspring of the French Revolution, opened it in person, but found the deputies opposed to his schemes for its alteration. A breath of revolutionary patriotism passed through the country, uniting Vilna and Warsaw and extending even to Kalisz, where Wincenty Niemojowski, the constitutionalist, meditated in a dungeon upon the articles granted by the Emperor of Russia to the Kingdom of Poland—articles countersigned by the Powers at

the Congress of Vienna. Every class of society acclaimed the wonderful poem of Adam Mickiewicz, "Konrad Wallenrod." This mighty song made the hearts of the people beat as one: especially did it strike a responsive chord in the soul of youth. In every breath the cry of Alfieri vibrated: "Siamo Schiavi ma schiavi sempre frenenti" ("We are slaves quivering under our yoke"). At that moment the revolution of 1830 broke out in Paris, the whole world looking on with breathless interest. The people who had been subdued by the Treaty of Vienna trembled. The sight of the tricolour floating over the French Consulate in Warsaw made the heart of every Pole beat high with hope—hope mingled with indignation. Nicolas I, strong in the principle of legitimacy, that rock on which was built the fortress of the Holy Alliance, and burning with a desire to strike at the heart of the Revolution—following the traditions of his grandmother Catherine, made energetic preparations for war. He ordered that the army of Poland should hold itself in readiness to march, the van-guard against the French Republic. On January 15, 1831, Lafayette, speaking in the Chamber of Deputies, said: "Gentlemen, war was prepared against us. Poland was to form the advance guard: the advance guard has turned against the army corps. Is any one astonished that this advance guard should excite our loyalty, our gratitude, our sympathy?"

The revolution broke out on the 29th of

November. It was demanded of Nicolas that he should observe the Constitution, but his reply made it clear that he placed under the ban of disgrace those subjects who dared to propose conditions to their legitimate sovereign. He himself made certain the support of Prussia and Austria. The die was cast—and the fortunes of war were against the revolutionaries. England did not wish to embroil herself with Russia; opinion in France was divided. Casimir Perier came into power on March 15, 1831, and Nicolas, who had reverted to his old prejudices against the monarchy, made it known that he would graciously receive Monsieur de Mortemart as Ambassador at Petersburg.

After a war lasting nine months the Polish forces were dispersed, and on September 8th the Russians occupied Warsaw. Paskiewicz, the Russian general, writing to the Tsar, said: "Sire, Warsaw is at our feet." This message, so sorrow-laden for Polish hearts, sent from the desolate banks of the Vistula, found a mournful echo on the banks of the Seine, in the stern words of the minister Sebastiani: "Order reigns in Warsaw."

The insurrection of 1830-31 was crushed, and the Polish troops left the kingdom, to be disarmed in Prussian or Austrian territory; and the capitulation of Warsaw was followed a month later by the surrender of the fortresses of Modlin and Zamosc. The Russian Government issued an amnesty, which granted pardon to the Polish combatants, but as soon as they began to return to their

country there was a movement to incorporate them in Russian regiments. "Those who were part of the command," wrote Nicolas I to his lieutenant, General Paskiewicz, "will be sent to Yaroslave. As to the *canaille*, dispatch them to Vologda." Accordingly the ordinary soldiers were sent to the distant provinces of the East, to the Caucasus, among the Tartars, towards the Chinese frontier. The High Court condemned to death, on their non-appearance, 258 persons, refugees in France, Germany, and England ; but this sentence was afterwards commuted, in 1834, to exile for life. The Tsar always paid more attention to the future than to the past, to means of prevention rather than of chastisement, and this was evidenced by the stern measures which now followed. The Constitution was suppressed ; one-tenth of the property of the Polish landowners was confiscated ; a state of war was declared, which lasted for twenty-two years ; the Universities of Vilna and Warsaw and the Scientific Society of the latter city were closed, the same decree affecting the College of Krzemieniec ; the libraries were sent to Russia to be distributed among the provincial universities ; the number of schools in Warsaw dwindled between 1830 and 1847 to twenty-three, in spite of the fact that the population numbered over twenty thousand ; the reading of the works of such authors as Mickiewicz, Slowacki, Krasinski, and Lelewel was strictly proscribed—it was forbidden even to mention their names in public. This state of affairs existed for nearly seventy years.

Even as late as 1905 the theatre of Warsaw produced "Mazepa," the beautiful tragedy of Slowacki, as the work of an unknown "J. S." In 1900 authority had not been gained for the publication of the biography of the great national historian Lelewel.

The Government ordered the state of the lesser nobility to be reduced to that of peasants, and they themselves deported into the Caucasus. The execution of this order was begun with five thousand families from Podolia, but the Tsar soon extended it to forty thousand others from the north and southwest. Still, in the midst of repression, of suffering, of trials innumerable, the spirit of Poland remained undaunted. Beaten down, the fire of freedom still glowed. Thousands of Poles had emigrated: they drifted towards France and England. Officers, soldiers, Government officials, members of the Diet, aristocrats, people of the upper and middle classes and peasants—there, in the land of France, was a Polish nation in miniature. This pilgrimage through Europe was no mournful journey to the grave, but a triumphal march, for these enthusiastic spirits, among whom was found the greatest poet who has ever adorned the pages of Polish literature, drew the sympathies of the noblest intellects of the age. Lafayette, Montalembert, and many others in France gave them their protection. The greater the misery in their own country grew, the sadder life became in reality, the purer became the source of their inspiration. Not only painters and poets,

but men of action felt this uplifting influence. The old Poland was no more than a burying-ground : they were now reconstructing a new Poland, a fortress impregnable, a city of God. They had kindled a new enthusiasm in the life of the soul, a spirit of sacrifice and abnegation, and in its sacred flame they would remould their poetical inspiration, and with its aid mount nearer to the lofty peaks of immortal beauty. Their works were the heavenly manna, the spiritual food of whole generations. Documents are in existence which describe the way in which the Poles deported to Siberia welcomed the poems of the great national poet, Adam Mickiewicz. His "Master Thaddeus" became a very fount of life. "Improvisation" was the *vade mecum* of youth. It was circulated throughout the country in the face of the gravest dangers ; it was carried as a sacred relic ; it was copied and re-copied thousands of times. Whole generations knew it by heart ; it became part of their blood, and pulsed like a living wave through the life of the nation.

In this miniature Poland, a political life, in which every class and opinion were represented, became very active, and separate parties emerged. The aristocracy grouped themselves round Prince Czartoryski, the democracy round the historian Lelewel. Contrary to the policy of the Prince, who endeavoured to reach the Government, Lelewel sought to solve the Polish question by a direct appeal to the people. Prince Czartoryski conferred in Paris with the representatives of the Powers, while

Lelewel sent forth appeals to the Italians, to the Hungarians, to the Spaniards. Their efforts were rewarded with no success. In 1832 the *Democratic Society* was founded, which proclaimed that the salvation of Poland would not be achieved by an insurrection alone, but that side by side with it must run a social revolution. At the very outset this society was in radical opposition to the aristocracy, on whom the democrats cast the whole responsibility for the partition. The freedom of the country could come solely from the people; the revolution of 1830 had failed because the rural population had participated only to a minor extent —so they said in effect, and found themselves in agreement with the French democrats of the day. Indeed, the Poles took an active part in all the democratic and socialistic organizations in France. The teaching of Enfantin, Cabet, and Fourier found ready acceptance on the part of this historic people, who, ever thirsting after liberty, had sworn to find the means of attaining it. Lifting their eyes from reality, from the things about them, only so far as to make an appeal to the principles of justice and equality, those fighting in the cause of Poland drew nearer to the star-like course they had envisioned for humanity.

Yielding to the pressure exercised by the representative of Russia, the French Government dispersed the emigrants throughout the country. In the cemeteries of the centre and south are many Polish graves; in that of Montmartre there is even

a *Polish Avenue*, and there rest Slowacki, Bohdan-Zaleski, and Lelewel ; while at Auxerre lies Mochnacki, the eminent historian of the insurrection of 1830. Montmorency, Avignon, Poitiers, Besançon, and many other towns in France shelter in death those visionaries whose descendants repaid France for her hospitality to their fathers, when in 1870 they poured out their blood for her, and when again 1914, 1915, and 1916 found them ready.

Before, however, they found eternal rest in the cemeteries of France, these combatants in the cause of liberty made frequent incursions into Poland. They met with ill success, although they roused fresh enthusiasm and gained new adherents ; but the flame of hope was not kept alive without danger to themselves, for Konarski died on the gallows, Zaliwski, taken prisoner in Galicia, suffered in the dungeons of Kufstein.

The party of Czartoryski did not repel in principle the scheme of an insurrection to regain national independence. It was opposed from the first to a premature rising unsupported by the Powers : to a rising which had not every class of Polish society grouped around its standard. It considered the nobility to be the support of the nation, and for the future organization of the country it called for monarchical government, and proposed to undertake, little by little, the necessary social reforms.

The democrats could not limit themselves to the mere propagation of theories : they desired to translate these into action. The revolution of 1846 had

been their work, and although they could not but regard it as in some degree premature, the active circles of Cracow and Posen were, on the other hand, of a different opinion. Composed of young and ardent spirits, these latter called for the immediate realization of the social revolution by means of a national rebellion. Louis Mieroslawski, who was accounted in revolutionary circles a strategist of genius, received the order that February 21, 1846, was the day chosen for the uprising. Military chiefs were nominated, a national Government created—all that lacked were arms and soldiers ! On February 12th the Prussian authorities arrested at Posen Louis Mieroslawski, Libelt, and others of the conspirators. In Poland a certain number of young men were executed, but affairs took a still more tragic turn in Cracow, which had been set up as a republic by the Treaty of Vienna. There a national Government had been created, which in its turn had transmitted its powers to a dictator. By a manifesto land and liberty had been given to the peasants, and the organization of armed detachments had begun ; but now all this ended in a manner unforeseen and tragic. The insurgents saw the Galician peasants rise against them.

Faithful to their motto: *Divide et impera* ("Divide and conquer"), the Austrian Government noised abroad by means of its officials the rumour that the landowners were arming themselves to snatch from the peasants their rights and liberties. For Metternich was the decision—with what

weapon should he crush the Polish revolution? A new Feast of St. Bartholomew! At Tarnow the movement was under the direction of the prefect Breindl von Wallerstein, who paid ten florins for the head of a dead insurgent, five for one taken alive. A miserable peasant named Szela actually killed seventeen members of a family called Bogusz. When a survivor of this butchery addressed a petition to the Emperor the latter replied by a decree dated August 5, 1847: "Desiring to show a special mark of our favour for his proof of fidelity to our throne and wishing to reward the loyal conduct of our trusty and well-beloved Szela in the events which have taken place in Galicia during the past year . . . we grant him the grand medal of honour in gold, bearing the inscription *Well deserved.*"

Austrian, German, Czech, and Hungarian officials, disguised as peasants, took command of the bands who attacked the manor-houses, and killed with scythes unarmed men. No less than two thousand perished in this terrible year at the hands of the miserable Galician peasantry.

By the terms of a treaty drawn up at Berlin, between Prussia, Russia, and Austria, the Republic of Cracow ceased to exist, and was incorporated with Austria under the name of the Grand Duchy of Cracow.

The French Revolution of 1848 gave occasion for a new effort on the part of Poland. The civilized world shook to its foundations, and Polish

hearts beat the faster. For, allied with all oppressed peoples, the Poles had never been satisfied to fight only for themselves, but in all the European revolutions they had taken an active part ; and wherever despotism reared its head there were they found in arms against it. They lent their blood and their lives to the sacred cause of liberty, confident that in the triumph of this ideal would lie the resurrection of their country. When the revolution broke out in 1848 at Milan, Adam Mickiewicz, the great national poet, formed a Polish legion, which fought for the independence of Italy, feeling assured that this was but another step towards clearing the way for the enfranchisement of their own land. In the well-known picture at the Sorbonne, where Michelet and Quinet occupy in triumph the chairs which became theirs on the retirement of the Government of July, a third chair is empty : it was destined for Mickiewicz, then fighting in Milan and Rome for the freedom of Italy.

The Russian Government was able to profit by the experience of the revolution of Cracow, as it did by the propaganda of the Abbé Sciegienny. It issued an edict assuring to peasants established on a holding of more than three *morgues* the ownership of that holding. An inventory was made of all the taxes. The Government said to the peasants : "I am your defender." It is at this moment that the Russian official steps in between the landed proprietor and the peasant.

The Crimean War made no great impression on

the kingdom. The country was strangled, and its revolutionary energy sensibly weakened.

After the death of the Emperor Nicolas, Russia, as well as Poland, expected an era of reform, both in political and social questions. This was evidenced when, in the year 1856, Warsaw received a visit from the Emperor Alexander II, who, while cordially acclaimed, was at the same time shown what high hopes rested on him. He can hardly be said to have justified these hopes by his announcement : "Gentlemen, no dreams ! Everything done by my father was well done." Yet through all discouragement Poland persisted, expectant of the new era.

The principle of nationality introduced into politics by Napoleon III once more awakened in the Poles their hope of independence. Portentous struggles were in progress on the plains of Lombardy, and the fire that had died down to no more than glowing ashes revived. There was an outburst of patriotism—the heart of youth was aroused ! Garibaldi was regarded almost as a national hero, and to aid his gallant countrymen the young men of the universities, especially the students at Kieff, departed in a body by circuitous routes to the shores of Italy to fight for her liberty and unity. Several thousand Poles deserted the Russian universities for the same purpose ; from Warsaw there went the scholars of the higher grade schools, the Art School, the Academy of Surgeons, and the Agro-nomic Institute. The tradition of Kilinski, that

heroic shoemaker who shared the destinies of Kosciuszko, was still alive among the working-classes of Poland.

The unity of Italy was achieved—what was there to hinder the reconstitution of dismembered Poland? The battles of Magenta and Solferino were celebrated in Warsaw as if they had been triumphs of Polish arms. France was relied upon to give her aid; and was not Napoleon the dictator of European diplomacy? Patriotic demonstrations took place in the capital, and this example was quickly followed in the provinces; people gathered in the churches to sing the national hymns, which soon were on every tongue. The Society of Agriculture, under the presidency of Count André Zamoyski, sought to bring about in Poland what had just been achieved by the Russian Government: if not the complete enfranchisement of the peasants, free since 1807, at least such an improvement in their lot as would knit together the whole nation in the same patriotic movement. In 1860 the Society determined to study the ways in which the peasants could become proprietors, but the Minister of the Interior, Mouchanow, forbade them to carry on the work. In February 1861, at a patriotic manifestation in Warsaw, an assembly of a thousand declared unanimously that *serfdom must be abolished*. That this project should be entertained proved the radical difference between the Polish landowners and the corresponding class in Russia,

who were represented on the Commission brought together by the Government, but who did everything they could to counteract and paralyse the humanitarian schemes of Alexander II.

The spirit of patriotism, an atmosphere charged with emotion and the need for sacrifice—these worked on the minds of the Polish landowners.<sup>1</sup>

On February 25th the demonstration left the church, and flowed out into the street, there to be met by an armed force; and two days later a crowd assembled for similar purposes was fired upon by the military, five people being killed. Indignation was general—indeed, several Russian officers of the garrison in Warsaw raised a protest against this massacre of a defenceless mob, against a fire obviously directed on women and children and on priests carrying the cross. One of them went so far as to place himself in front of his company, and, to give sufficient force to his protest, actually committed suicide. Another went through the town to obtain signatures to a petition to the Emperor. “Our nation,” so ran the address,<sup>2</sup> which through centuries enjoyed liberal institutions, for more than sixty years now has endured the cruellest sufferings. No means exist by which the story of these sufferings may be brought to the

<sup>1</sup> At this time there were active preparations in Russia for the emancipation of the peasants. Alexander II, speaking to the nobles of Lithuania on November 20, 1857, asked them to consider a means for bettering the condition of the peasants. The Lithuanian landowners, by a large majority, declared for the abolition of serfdom.

steps of the Throne ; the bitter cry which goes up may not make itself heard except through the voice of the martyrs, a holocaust offered daily. A country whose civilization is already on a par with that of her Western neighbours should be able to develop herself on a moral, not material, basis ; to the end that her Church, her legislation, her public instruction, and the whole of her social organization should not be incapable of upholding her national genius and the great historic traditions of the past."

In reply to this address, which was supported by Prince Gortschakoff, the Government of St. Petersburg decided to grant Poland administrative and scholastic reforms, the execution of which was entrusted to one of the great Polish landlords, the Marquis Wielopolski. A department of public instruction was at once founded, and borough and municipal councils were established. Wielopolski longed for the powers of the 1815 Constitution. He was not popular—he could not well be ! Of an arbitrary nature, and lacking in tact, he believed in the might of his own arm, and had never learned to steer a safe course between the Russia who wished to give as little as possible and that Poland who demanded above all her liberty. Still, the Marquis during the time he was in power did much. He first created an educational system peculiarly Polish by virtue of the spirit which animated it, and yet entirely European in its pedagogic tendencies. A special commission, composed of the most dis-

tinguished Russian teachers, made it the subject of a long discussion at St. Petersburg, and could not withhold their admiration. On May 16, 1861, Wielopolski also succeeded in obtaining a decree regulating the repurchase of lands belonging to the peasants.

But the Poles, preoccupied by the idea of European intervention, could hardly be content with an educational system. They were all the more determined since, not only was Wielopolski at Warsaw, but associated with him was General Suchozanet, who made no mention of educational reform, and remained faithful to the policy of reprisals.

The revolutionary movement took firmer and firmer hold on the people, and before long scenes like those which had taken place in Warsaw were enacted in Vilna. It was strangely ironic that, by applying the same system of repression to all these provinces, Russia should to some extent seal that very unity of the Polish nation which she had set herself to destroy. An official proclamation spoke of Lithuania, the home of Kosciuszko and Mickiewicz, as a province that had always belonged to the Russian Empire and had been united to Poland only for a short period.

In connection with the nomination of members to the provincial and district councils at the end of September, the electors made their wishes known by signing two petitions, one demanding national representation, the other seeking equal rights for

the Jews. The two petitions should have reached the Lieutenant of the Emperor on October 18th, but on the 14th, rumours of this move having reached official circles, and an agitation at the same time manifesting itself in the Empire concerning the Universities of St. Petersburg and Moscow, the Lieutenant declared a state of siege.

On the 15th of October there was to have been a demonstration in memory of Kosciuszko. The population proceeded to the churches. The troops did not prevent any one from entering. But once the churches were filled, the army received the order to surround them. The crowd refused to come out ; they stayed in the churches the whole day and part of the night, excited, hungry, but immovable. When ordered to quit the house of God, they demanded first of all the withdrawal of the troops. At four o'clock in the morning, after a siege of seventeen hours, the soldiers rushed into the cathedral. More than two thousand people were arrested and conducted to the citadel. In the morning an incredible scene took place between General Guerstenzweig, Military Commander of Warsaw, and Count Lambert, the Emperor's Lieutenant. The former was responsible for the invasion of the churches by the troops, the latter protested against this measure, which would range all the clergy of the country in the ranks of the implacable enemies of the Government. After a most exciting scene, the General blew out his brains, and Count Lambert left Warsaw suddenly, never to return.

Wielopolski immediately sent in his resignation, not daring to carry through his reforms in face of the prevailing conditions. In June 1862 a National Central Committee, afterwards the National Government, came into existence, receiving the name of the *Red Committee* in opposition to the *White Committee*. Both were faithful to the same ideal and worked with the same aim in view—the reconstitution of Poland. They differed, however, in mode of action ; for while the Red Committee held that the only way of salvation was by the path of rebellion, the White Committee wished above all things to attain its end peacefully. The Red Committee acted in conjunction with the Parisian Committee, and through that body with the Military School of Cuneo, where officers became cognisant of the next insurrectional movement.

During this time Wielopolski was trying at St. Petersburg to bring home to the Emperor the only means by which Poland could be pacified : by a radical reform in the method of administration, Foreseeing the probability of an outbreak during the spring of 1863, in which Poles and Russians might join forces, the Russian Government resolved to avert this potential uprising by promptly dealing with Poland. A humbled Poland would make much easier the path of repression in Russia, and the first step should be a levy of Polish recruits.

Wielopolski became the instrument of this policy, and decided that the levy should take place on January 22nd. But on learning the news the young

men fled with one accord to the forests. They formed themselves into detachments, and the Central Committee, without fixing the actual date of the rising, on January 16th declared a state of rebellion. The leaders of the insurrection, however, warned the Committee on the 17th that they could not long defer the date, for fear of a spontaneous but premature outburst, which could only end in failure. In accordance with this warning the Committee decided upon the night of January 22nd-23rd as the moment for action.

There were at this time about 85,000 Russian troops in Poland, yet the insurgents were able to hold out against them for a year and a half—in certain districts until 1865. During the eighteen months the rebellion was in progress nearly a thousand encounters took place between the Prosna and the Dnieper; at the end of the third month the movement had extended to Lithuania, to White Russia, and to the South-West Province. Many of the detachments were commanded by officers who, but a short time before, had been serving in the ranks of the Russian Army; such a Russian, for instance, as Potebnia, the friend of Herzen; such a Frenchman as Rochebrun; such an Italian as Nullo. The insurgents, chiefly of the younger generation (indeed, it may be said that the youth of the schools without distinction of class enrolled themselves under the banner of insurrection), were drawn in the main from the lesser nobles and the middle classes, but the movement attracted the

artisans, the workers, many miners from the coal-fields of the south, and a fair number of peasants, as those in the Lithuanian detachments of Sierakowski, though they were proportionally least numerous. It has been maintained by many Russian historians that the peasants were altogether opposed to the insurrection; as a matter of fact it could never have lasted so long without their goodwill.

After the Central Committee had become the National Government, it published a manifesto containing this declaration of faith: "All the sons of Poland shall be free, all shall be equal, and the land occupied by the peasants shall belong to them henceforth without restrictions." Provision was made, it may here be mentioned, for the compensation of the former owners.

The nature of this rebellion, its evolution, cannot be rightly understood by regarding it simply from the standpoint either of Russia or of Poland. A question of international politics was at stake—a question which engaged the attention of the diplomats of Europe.

Prussia at that time was governed by Bismarck. He realized that it was possible, and therefore to him essential, to profit by the difficulties in which Russia found herself engulfed. There was an opportunity to further his own vast imperial designs. To this end he made a private proposal to the Russian Government, resulting in an agreement which was concluded on February 8, 1863. The object was to bring about the submission of Poland.

On February 11th he informed the British Ambassador, Sir Andrew Buchanan, of the arrangement.

"What?" protested the latter. "Prussia co-operate with Russia to crush the Polish insurrection? Will Prussian soldiers, then, be sent against Poland?"

"Yes," said Bismarck. "The resurrection of the Kingdom of Poland is detrimental to Prussia. . . . The insurrection will be promptly crushed in concert with Russia, or if the situation develops and becomes more serious—well, say that the Russians were driven out of Poland—then we should occupy that kingdom to the advantage of Prussia."

"But," replied the British Ambassador, amused at these confidences, "Europe would never allow it."

With a glacial calm the Prussian Minister asked, "Who is 'Europe'?"

"The different great nations," replied Sir Andrew.

"Are they all of one mind?" retorted the other.

The Ambassador dared not reply positively, but stated that France would never tolerate a new annihilation of Poland.

"For us," replied Bismarck, "this annihilation is a matter of life and death."

At this time Bismarck stood alone in his alliance with Russia. The whole of Europe was against him: even his own Prussian Chambers opposed him. And France? France, who had made war with Italy, who had snatched Milan from the Habsburgs, who had favoured the monarchy of Victor-Emmanuel, who had upheld the cause of the

people, and sounded the clarion note of deliverance for the nations to the very confines of the Ottoman Empire—was it not incumbent upon her to interfere for the welfare of Poland?

Napoleon III accordingly sent a personal letter to Alexander II, in which he counselled him to make Poland an independent kingdom, with the Grand Duke Constantin as king. Certain of the support of Prussia, the Tsar scouted this proposal. The Court of the Tuilleries, supported by the opinion of the country, thereupon undertook a diplomatic campaign on a larger scale. On April 10th the three Powers, England, France, and Austria, addressed diplomatic notes to St. Petersburg, asking Russia to re-establish Poland on such a basis as would ensure a lasting peace. Lord John Russell said: “The question is whether the engagements into which Russia entered, and to which she set her hand in the Treaty of Vienna, have been faithfully carried out by her. Her Majesty’s Government feels obliged to demand a reply to this question.”

This demonstration was further supported by notes from all the Powers who had appended their signatures to the Treaty of Vienna—Spain, Portugal, Italy, Sweden, Denmark, the Netherlands, Turkey, and Saint Siège. Such an important demonstration should have made itself felt throughout the whole of Europe, but once more it proved to be a case of the mountain in labour. The diplomatic campaign dragged on and resulted in nothing! Unhappy Poland! Never before had the solici-

tude of Europe been so fruitless, indeed, even detrimental, as it was for this hapless nation.

The triumph of Bismarck was complete. Sir Andrew Buchanan, writing on November 28, 1863, to Lord John Russell, said : "The events which have taken place in Poland, in spite of the reproof of the three Great Powers, have led the Germans to believe that no one will oppose their arms in the work of the spoliation of Denmark." The success of Bismarck's schemes certain, there followed the wars of 1864, 1866, and 1870.

Poland still struggled on, but against immense odds. Russia, with public opinion on the side of the Government, had 120,000 soldiers in the country ; Mouravieff was proclaimed an archangel Michael of Holy Russia, and the war upon which he entered was declared "Holy."

In the month of April Monseigneur Felinski, Archbishop of Warsaw, addressed his celebrated letter to the Emperor : "Blood is flowing in streams, and affliction, instead of lowering the spirits of the combatants, serves but to endue them with a sterner resolve. I entreat your Majesty in the name of Christian charity, in the interests of both countries to put an end to this war of annihilation. The institutions granted by your Majesty are not sufficient to ensure the happiness of the country. Poland will not be content with an administrative autonomy ; she needs a political life of her own. Sire, take up this cause with a strong hand. Make of Poland an independent nation, united to Russia

by the bond of your august family. It is the only way to stop this shedding of blood, and to establish an abiding peace. Time is pressing. Every day the chasm between the Throne and the nation becomes wider. Sire, do not wait for the end of the struggle. There is a greater grandeur in clemency, which recoils in the face of such carnage than in a victory which wipes out the inhabitants of a kingdom."

But his was a voice crying in the wilderness.

Mouravieff was dictator of Lithuania, and at once showed his hand. Insurgents who had been taken prisoners were brought before him on his arrival at the first town in his jurisdiction. "It is useless to take prisoners," was his order. A few days later he issued a circular which, in brief, declared : All sympathy with the insurrection would be punished in the same way as a direct participation ; mourning was prohibited, and women who wore black would be punished ; the names of the insurgents, the composition of the bands, and the name of their chief must all be revealed without any consideration whatsoever of kinship ; if a murder were committed, or the insurgents procured provisions in any place, all its inhabitants would be held responsible. Each of these offences was punishable by death, exile to Siberia, confiscation of property. To the peasants Mouravieff declared : "Peasants, you are no longer obliged to work for your lord—try to destroy the rebels' means of livelihood. If any passer-by seems to you a suspicious

character, have him arrested. Hitherto evil-intentioned persons, either priests or landlords, have obtained mastery over you; now shake this off. Do not permit a priest to profane his church by reading proclamations subversive to law and order."

Mouravieff, utterly without pity towards priests and nobles, gave orders that presbyteries and castles should be given to the flames. To strike terror into all hearts he sent innocent people to the gallows, filled the prisons with his victims, and dispatched other unfortunates to the distant provinces of the Empire. He had all the libraries kept in the cloisters and in the colleges confiscated. The books seized from twenty-six cloisters, twenty-two colleges, twenty-six high-grade schools, and twelve libraries, public and private, were brought to Vilna and deposited in a Public Library, the Polish department of which was not in use at all till 1905. At the present time this library contains 125,000 Polish volumes, 329 Slav manuscripts, 2,360 Polish manuscripts, and 65,000 letters, altogether nearly 130,000 manuscript documents, 165 early printed books, and 583 books printed in the sixteenth century. Orders were issued for the closing of the astronomical observatory at Vilna, and the printing of books was prohibited in Lithuania.

At Warsaw General Berg pursued similar tactics. In June Wielopolski was dismissed and the Grand Duke Constantin recalled. Then, following the example of Mouravieff, who had ordered the public execution of 200 prisoners, Berg executed the

insurgents in the streets of Warsaw ; he imposed a special fine upon the people for outrages against the police ; he gave into the hands of the chiefs of the district powers of life and death over the nobles of the country. To put an end to the possibility of a new rising, it was decided to introduce what has been called peasant reform. Previous mention has been made of what had already been attempted in this direction.

Katkoff maintained that the Polish question would be solved in a manner favourable to Russia if once the peasant population were won over to her side ; that whoever brought about such a consummation would be master of the country. Accordingly in October 1863 the Government sent to Warsaw a Commission, composed of such men as Milioutine, Samarine, and Tscherkasski, charged to elaborate a plan of reforms by which the peasants' support should be gained.

Like all Slavophiles, they were under the impression that the chief obstacle to an agreement between the Poles and the Russians was the Latin culture with which the ruling classes were deeply imbued. To bring the mass of the people of Poland under the spell of the so-called Slav tradition, the influence of the ruling classes must be removed, and the people emancipated both morally and materially. The peasants were therefore made the owners of the houses and lands which up to that time they had held only as tenants, and this at the expense of the landlords, except for the payment of a very

small indemnity, ground rents and forced labour being abolished altogether. Thus it was intended to remove the common people from the sphere of influence of the priest and the lord. Not only this, but the ancient rights were so arranged as to be productive of discord between lord and peasant, and in these disputes the Russian administration invariably arbitrated. The peasants further retained the right of easements, this right being under the care of eighty-five new officials called Rural Commissioners, and the landlords received their indemnification in the form of duties. Where the expense of the reform fell heavily upon the peasants, a land tax was forced upon them, which they had paid for forty years without any modification.

The Abbé Lamennais, in his "Hymn to Poland," dated Rome, April 1832, uttered these words: "Sleep on, O Poland, sleep ! That resting-place they call thy tomb is but thy cradle !" In keeping with these prophetic words the struggle for liberty raged in Poland throughout the nineteenth century, to end invariably in defeat. In 1831, 1846, 1863, and as late as 1906, the dreams of the nation soared —borne upwards on the pinions of the mighty victory of Marathon, only to be shattered in disaster as at Cherонæa.

The rising of 1830 was a revolution of nobles, of the army, of men of letters, and the same may be said of 1846; but in 1863 a new element, furnished by the towns, came into force, when the lesser nobles, the middle classes, the younger gene-

UNION OF  
FOR INDEPENDENCE 1830-1899

ration of both, and of the artisans of Warsaw, all took their part. It was more than the blossoming of the lilies placed on the tomb of 1830: out of that sepulchre rose a presence new and strange—democracy proclaiming the dawn of a new era. It is true that many attempts were made to alienate the peasant from the rest of the nation, to present him to the civilized world as a disseminator of discord, as a source of trouble and annoyance to Europe. He was given a communal autonomy; officials were specially created to bring discord between him and the rest of the nation; schools were founded for him, where the instruction was given in Russian—and after forty years of this régime 80 per cent. of the peasants could neither read nor write! In our epoch there has emerged in every country a new social type, which may be designated the proletariat of the towns. Poland, in her development, reveals this trend, and possesses great industrial centres; but even in them there is a dearth of schools. Indeed, only 59 per cent. of the inhabitants of Warsaw are acquainted with the alphabet.

Yet something of a miracle has occurred. The peasant on the land, the artisan in the town, demanded the liberation of their country. In the communal institutions (where their representatives settled their affairs, and from which the great land-owners were excluded), in rural communities, everywhere the peasants tore the official writings into pieces. These men, although ignorant themselves,

required that the Polish language should be heard once more in the schools and in the administration of the country; and not content even with this, they drove away the teachers who were alien to them in birth and sympathy. They declared, in fact, that they would pay no tax so long as the justice of their claims remained unacknowledged. As in France, so everywhere in Poland, while the workers claimed the rights of their class, they desired above all to see Poland free and independent, under one form or another living her own political life. All their aspirations grouped themselves round the one word "Poland!" Sleep no more, then, O Poland! Thy resting-place is not a tomb, but a cradle!

The problem of Poland in the last analysis is as simple as any of the great world truths. In feeling and in civilization England and Poland find mutually a bond of union. By a heavenly rainbow, one end of which rests on this fair land, the other on the shores of the Vistula, Poland is joined to England. On the arch is traced in letters of fire the watchword for which hearts have suffered in Poland as in England throughout all generations, the watchword of liberty. England, country of the free! give help to Poland, that she may gain that freedom which both countries love, that freedom for which she herself has struggled so long!

UNIVERSITY OF  
CALIFORNIA

# THE POPULATION of THE POLISH COMMONWEALTH

BY

ARTHUR E. GURNEY

With a Preface by

LUDWIK JANOWSKI, M.A., Ph.D.

*Lecturer on Slavonic Literatures at the University of Cracow*



## PREFACE

IT is with the greatest satisfaction that I take the opportunity of writing a few words of introduction to Mr. A. E. Gurney's pamphlet. The author has given to the British public a most accurate and at the same time a very vivid account of the population of the former Polish Commonwealth, a nation which notwithstanding its indisputable right to existence, the world at large appears to have forgotten.

What, then, was this Commonwealth, which 120 years ago had to yield to superior forces, whose very name was struck out from the map of Europe?

It was a first-class political Power, extremely original in its structure, and in respect of its constitutional arrangements and progressive policy much ahead of the other continental States.

To Great Britain alone and to her constitutional development Poland must yield a place ; but though the Polish Commonwealth did not possess such a well-organized State machinery as this country, yet she herself worked out quite independently her own Habeas Corpus Act, her limitations of the royal prerogative, a scheme of popular legislation, etc.

The real greatness of the Commonwealth was not in the extent of her territories, which nevertheless

occupied a great part of the Mid-European plain, but it was to be found in the fact that the union of the different nationalities incorporated on her territory was a voluntary one. Since the fourteenth century Poland, which had no natural eastern boundaries, grew, not by way of conquests and annexations, but through federations and voluntary unions. The rich and healthy Polish State attracted other nationalities, which desired the benefit of constitutional liberties, and absorbed Western civilization, which again radiated in return from Poland far beyond her own frontiers. In the fourteenth century Red Ruthenia (part of Galicia and Volhynia of to-day) and Lithuania joined Poland, in the fifteenth century Ducal Prussia, and in the sixteenth Masovia and Livland followed their example, while Moldavia, Curland, and Brandenburg (later Kingdom of Prussia) acknowledged her sovereignty. These new provinces joined Poland as autonomous units, but they soon fell under the influence of her higher civilization. The inhabitants of the new territories clamoured for the introduction "of the good Christian and liberal laws of the Polish Kingdom." Owing to the voluntary and complete adoption of the Polish social structure by these other nationalities, they all assumed a uniform character and formed a single *Res publica* extending from the Baltic to the shores of the Black Sea.

The Poles were the creators of this State and cemented together its different parts. The other nations, the Lithuanians, the Germans, and numerous Eastern Slavonic nationalities, the Armenians and the Tartars, took up the Polish civilization with its progressive ideas. They undertook along with

the Poles the great historical task of the Commonwealth—viz. the defence of the West against the East. In this free and federal State everybody spoke and wrote in whatever language he wished.<sup>1</sup> Education made great progress. Side by side with this political process, another development of a sociological character was going on also and was amalgamating all the different racial elements of the Commonwealth into one national whole. We know of a similar process in history. The Romans ruled in Gallia during five centuries and Gallia was Romanized. But this was not the result of a policy of forcible denationalization, as is so often the case. It was due to the higher development of Roman civilization. If we bear in mind that Rome was a centralizing State, while the Polish Commonwealth was highly decentralized, we shall appreciate still more the value of this process of natural amalgamation and of the ideas of equality and justice on which it was based. The results of the union far outgrew the hopes of its founders. The amalgamation was the result of the common sacrifices and endeavours of the population of the Commonwealth, and it was strengthened by the constant and unshakable will which such common sacrifices produce. In this way there grew up the idea of common citizenship in a common State. This can be seen even in those who could have had the support of another State, as was the case of the German burgesses of Dantzig, who nevertheless

<sup>1</sup> In the greater part of the Eastern territory White Ruthenian was the official language, but in time its use was given up quite naturally in favour of Polish without any pressure from the Government.

remained faithful to the Commonwealth till the very end.

This process of amalgamation would have been carried on had it not been for the external pressure of enemies and for the internal dissensions brought about by the general disintegration of Europe.

The love of the great Polish mother country mingled with the very blood of her sons, and remained equally strong after the fall of the Commonwealth. We see the astonishing fact that a desire for the reconstruction of their famous State which had made the happiness of so many previous generations never ceased in any of its former territories. In 1794, 1806, 1812, 1831, 1846, 1848, and 1863 the struggle for liberty was carried on within all these ancient boundaries. And to-day the Poles who are living in the midst of other nationalities which have preserved their own languages regard these other peoples as sons of the same motherland.

The last National Polish Government (1863-4), which appeared at a time when in some parts a feeling of ethnographic dissimilarity began to be felt, solemnly proclaimed that the ancient principle of "freedom and equality" should be preserved for ever, and should always be the basis of the Polish State.

These high traditions still continue in the hearts of all true sons of the Commonwealth.

LUDWIK JANOWSKI.

## THE POPULATION OF THE POLISH COMMONWEALTH

THE extensive territories which, up to the year 1772, constituted the Commonwealth of Poland are inhabited by several distinct nationalities, the majority of which belong to the Slavonic race. Among them all the Poles are by far the most numerous.

The Poles are of medium height, and—especially in the northern territories—of slighter build than the members of other Slavonic nations, but they are generally of more harmonious proportions. This lends them an air of distinction which appears to raise them above the other nations.

The majority of the Poles are fair-haired, and the predominating colour of the eyes is light blue or grey. Most of the men, especially among the upper classes, are handsome, and the women are frequently of exceptional beauty.

The people are active, ardent, courageous, and chivalrous, and hospitality and charity are their chief virtues.

Their disposition is gay and impulsive, and they are inclined to be dreamers—these traits have found expression in Polish poetry and art, as well as in the music of the people.

The Poles are an exceptionally gifted people, and

the nation has produced men of genius in every walk of life: Polish military leaders, statesmen, scientists, poets, musicians, painters, etc., are among the greatest the world has known.

The country watered by the Vistula and its tributaries is the cradle of the Polish nation, which spread thence in all directions, until its territories extended from the Oder to the Dnieper, and from the Baltic to Roumania, and it came to be one of the most powerful and most highly civilized of European nations.

The density of population varies very considerably in different parts of the Polish territories. It is highest in Galicia, where—in the districts around Cracow—as many as 648 inhabitants to the square mile are to be found, and lowest in White Ruthenia, especially in Polesia, where their numbers drop as low as 47 to the square mile.

It is very difficult to arrive at the actual numbers of the various nationalities inhabiting the territories of the former Commonwealth, as the Powers by which Poland was partitioned do not compile impartial statistics on the matter. The difficulty of obtaining reliable figures is increased by the circumstance that the Russian, Austrian, and Prussian authorities employ different methods in the compilation of statistics. All three classify the population according to their language, but whereas the Austrian authorities consider the language actually spoken by given persons, in their daily intercourse, as deciding their nationality, the

Russian and Prussian authorities classify the inhabitants according to their paternal language. Furthermore, the Russian statistics have a separate rubric for the Jews, but the Prussian and Austrian have not.

Where the Poles are concerned the language spoken by the people can, in most instances, be taken as a reliable indication of their nationality; but this does not always apply. The historic connection existing between the Polish nation and the Roman Catholic Church has created a feeling of "religious nationality" in some of the people. Thus the Poles living in Ruthenia, for instance, consider that even though they adopt the language of the people among whom they live, they do not lose their nationality as long as they retain their "Polish" faith.

On the other hand, there are among the Poles numerous Protestants, Uniats, Jews, and even Mohammedans. The majority of these non-Catholic Poles are of Polish origin, the others have been assimilated, and although, in many cases, they do not employ the Polish language in their daily intercourse, they none the less consider themselves Poles.

It will be understood that under the circumstances the figures given in the following pages cannot claim to be absolutely accurate. Being the results of patient researches and calculations carried out by eminent Polish scientists, they can, however, be safely accepted as in no way biased or exaggerated.

## GERMAN POLAND

THE Polish territories now forming parts of the Kingdom of PRUSSIA consist of the provinces of Posen and West Prussia, and parts of East Prussia, Pomerania, and Silesia.

In the Grandduchy of POSEN a perpetual conflict is going on between two nationalities — the indigenous Polish and the immigrant German. The Germans have been numerous in these parts even before the partitions of Poland, and, under the fostering care of the Government, they have since then greatly increased, also becoming more powerful and aggressive.

The Poles represent about 65 per cent. of the entire population of the province, and, notwithstanding the efforts of the Prussian authorities to the contrary, their relative numbers are not diminishing anywhere, and in most districts are steadily increasing.

The proportion of Germans (about 34 per cent.), on the other hand, is declining in spite of all efforts of the authorities to augment, or even only maintain, their numbers by introducing German officials,

encouraging the immigration of settlers from the interior of Germany, etc. There is a steady outflow of Germans from this province to the agriculturally less developed western portions of the kingdom, which more than counterbalances those endeavours.

The proportion of the Poles is highest in the parts of the Duchy bordering on the Kingdom of Poland, but the districts where they are in the majority are constantly increasing. The best illustration of their power of resisting the Prussian policy of extermination is the fact that during the term of twenty years—from 1890 to 1910—the territory with a Polish majority increased by about 850 square miles.

The majority of the Poles inhabiting this province are Roman Catholics, while the Germans are—with relatively few exceptions—Protestants. The Polish Protestants inhabit the southern districts of the province, and among them cases of Germanization have, from time to time, occurred; on the other hand, considerable numbers of German Catholics have become Polonized.

The Jews, who in 1831 represented 6·7 per cent. of the entire population, are steadily decreasing, their relative numbers having fallen to 1·3 per cent.

The Poles of the Duchy form a separate political party, and in times of elections vote unanimously for the Polish candidates, with the exception of a small percentage who belong to the Socialists.

In EAST PRUSSIA the southern districts were occupied by the Poles from very early times, and numerous Polish settlements were to be found scattered about in a northerly direction right up to the shores of the Baltic Sea.

Being unorganized they, in many cases, easily fell under the influence of the German settlers, who had the powerful organizations of German knights at their backs. Their conversion to Protestantism, at the time of the Reformation, helped still further towards the denationalization of the Poles in East Prussia, by bringing them under the Germanizing influence of the Lutheran clergy. The Prussian authorities, too, spare no pains in their endeavours to erase the consciousness of their Polish nationality from the minds of the people; going to such ridiculous extremes as officially calling them "Masovians"—as if the tribal name precluded the wider national one of "Poles"—and calling the Polish language the "Masovian" language.

In these circumstances it is not astonishing that in some districts of East Prussia the percentage of the Polish population is decreasing. Rather is it surprising that the Poles should still hold extensive areas of the province, in spite of the fact that they have no leaders, and that Church, School, and Government combine in endeavouring to denationalize them.

East Prussia contains besides Prussian Masovia, the districts of Ermeland, taken from Poland

at the time of the first partition. The Poles inhabit the southern parts of this territory, the Germans the northern, and both nationalities belong to the Roman Catholic Church.

The Poles represent a little over 47 per cent. of the entire population of East Prussia, but it must not be forgotten that—the province being sparsely populated—the towns tend artificially to lower their relative numbers. In the rural districts the proportion of the Poles is nearly 62 per cent., but the towns, being only administrative centres, have an almost entirely German population, composed mainly of Government and railway officials—with their families—the garrisons, etc.

WEST PRUSSIA has retained its Polish character in a much higher degree than the last-named province, although here as elsewhere the Prussian authorities have spared no effort to weaken the Polish element. Being organized, the Poles of this province were, however, able to offer a stronger resistance to Germanizing influences than in East Prussia, and in spite of expropriations, German colonization, Prussian school politics, prohibitions against the use of the Polish language, etc., the percentage of the Polish population is increasing. The relative numbers of the Germans, on the contrary, are declining, in consequence of the emigration of large numbers to the industrial western districts of Germany.

The Poles are most numerous in the districts  
8

adjoining the Kingdom of Poland, where in some parts they represent about 80 per cent. of the entire population, but the territories with a Polish majority (averaging 60 per cent.) stretch right up to the Baltic Sea, thus linking up the main portion of the Polish territories with the coast.

The proportion of the Polish inhabitants to the entire population of West Prussia is  $35\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. In this province the towns are again little more than administrative centres, and as the Poles are debarred from all appointments under the Government, on the railways, etc., their population is almost entirely German.

In an agricultural country like West Prussia the factor deciding its national character is, however, the rural population, and of this about 50 per cent. is Polish.

The northern portion of the province, bordering on the sea, is inhabited by the Cassovians, a sturdy Polish tribe which also inhabits a portion of the adjoining provinces of Pomerania. These speak a dialect of their own which is, however, undoubtedly of Polish origin, although some German scientists have tried to prove the contrary. That the sentiments of the Cassovians are entirely Polish is proved by the fact that since 1871 they have never returned any other than Polish deputies to the German Parliament.

It may be mentioned here that, for the Poles, the elections in these provinces mean a desperate fight for self-preservation, as the governmental

parties employ all means in their power to increase their own votes to the detriment of the Poles. They do not recoil even from such practices as omitting names from the lists of voters, cancelling votes, hindering electioneering, bringing Government pressure to bear on the voters, etc.

For West Prussia its separation from the rest of Poland has had most unfortunate results, for whereas in former times all the extensive export trade of the Commonwealth passed along its roads and great waterway—the Vistula—the province now is nothing more than a quiet, out-of-the-way corner on the outskirts of Prussia. Danzig, too, once a city of great importance as the granary of Europe, has sunk to the level of a third-rate seaport town.

SILESIA fell away from the Commonwealth as early as the Middle Ages, when the upper classes of its inhabitants became voluntarily Germanized. At that time large numbers of German settlers took up their abode in this province, and only the population of the districts along the upper reaches of the Oder—especially of Upper Silesia, as those on its right bank are called—remained Polish. In spite of its Polish population even this territory was, however, not Polish from an intellectual point of view, as both the towns and the seats of the nobility diffused an alien civilization.

The development of the mining industry, and introduction of compulsory education roused the

rural population of Upper Silesia, a national revival was started, relations with the main body of the Polish nation were re-established, and an intellectual class evolved. At present, having founded, besides, a national Press, the people of Upper Silesia are developing on Polish lines.

The Poles represent 57 per cent. of the entire population of Upper Silesia ; the remainder, with the exception of an insignificant number of Bohemians, being German. If, however, four districts in the north-eastern portion of the regency—which contain only isolated Polish parishes—are left out of account, the proportion of the Poles to the population of the remaining territories is 64 per cent. To counterbalance the four districts alluded to, large numbers of Poles are to be found in the regency of Breslau, in Central Silesia.

As the Polish population of Upper Silesia was formerly in a considerably greater majority, it might appear that its numbers are declining ; but that is not the case. The relative decrease is due to the influx of enormous numbers of Germans, especially to the mining districts, and the discouragement—by means of legislative restrictions and petty molestations—of the immigration of Poles from Galicia and the Kingdom of Poland.

Notwithstanding all this Upper Silesia has not lost its Polish character, and the national movement has made such good progress that the regency,

is now considered one of the most loyal of Polish territories.

With the exception of one small district, the inhabitants of which are Protestants, the population of Upper Silesia—Polish and German alike—belongs to the Roman Catholic Church.

## AUSTRIAN POLAND

BORDERING on the last-named Prussian province are the Polish territories belonging, since 1815, to AUSTRIA, which consist of Galicia and Austrian Silesia.

AUSTRIAN SILESIA is one of the Austrian crown-lands, which means that in all local matters it is self-governing. This would be very advantageous to the Poles if they constituted the entire population ; but unfortunately they do not. The province is inhabited by three different nationalities : Poles, Germans, and Bohemians, and consists, ethnographically, of two distinct parts—a Polish and a German area.

The Poles represent 61 per cent. of the entire population in the Polish, and  $\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. in the German area ; the Germans and Bohemians 15 and 24 per cent. respectively in the Polish, 79 and 20 per cent. in the German area.

The prevailing religion in Austrian Silesia is the Roman Catholic, the Protestants amounting to only about 23 per cent. of the entire population ; but these are almost exclusively Poles—indeed the

Reformed Church in this province has never been anything but Polish.

In consequence of the Polish territories being united with the German, all questions concerning them are decided by the German parliamentary majority. The strength of the Germans is further increased by the Austrian parliamentary system, which is such that the Germans, who represent 45 per cent. of the entire population, elect 80 per cent. of the deputies representing that province in the Austrian Parliament.

Appointments under the Government and local authorities are, in this province, given almost exclusively to Germans; the greater part of the land is owned by Germans; and every effort is made to oust the Poles.

Not only the Germans, but also the Bohemians in the Polish districts of Austrian Silesia, wield a power which is out of proportion to their numbers. This is due to the fact that in the mining districts—the richest and most densely populated parts of the province—nearly all important posts are held by Bohemians, who also almost exclusively practise the learned professions. The Bohemians, no less than the Germans, make every effort to obtain control of the communal authorities, schools, and other public institutions.

As the Poles in Austrian Silesia belong entirely to the lower classes—the upper classes, here as in Prussian Silesia, having become Germanized during the Middle Ages—they have had a hard struggle to

resist the combined efforts of the Germans and Bohemians to denationalize them. They have, however, by now succeeded in overcoming all difficulties placed in their way, and created a strong national Press, legal self-defence organizations, and an excellent educational system. The loss of their national individuality is therefore no longer to be feared.

By far the most extensive of the Polish territories under Austrian domination, are those which constitute the province of GALICIA.

In this portion of Poland the Poles enjoy more liberty than they are allowed in any other ; not only have they here two Polish universities and Polish schools, but all official appointments are open to them, and Polish is the official language of the province. The army also is Polish, up to a certain point, as the Polish conscripts are not sent to other provinces for the time of their military service—as is the case in the Russian and Prussian parts of Poland—but are allotted to garrisons in Galicia. The officers are, however, mostly Austrians.

Galicia can be divided into two areas—Western Galicia, the population of which is almost entirely Polish, and Eastern Galicia, where the Ruthenians are in a majority.

Besides these two nationalities both divisions of the province contain a considerable percentage of Jews, who here, as in other parts of the former Commonwealth, must be regarded as a separate

nationality. They speak, among themselves, a language of their own,<sup>1</sup> have their own schools, and generally lead a life apart, taking no share in Polish affairs except in so far as they touch purely Jewish interests. The enormous numbers of these poor Jews who, centuries ago, settled down here when hunted out of other parts of Europe, and have to this day retained many of their mediæval customs and superstitions, are a peculiarity of Poland.

The majority of the educated Jews, however, consider themselves Poles and take an active share in all national affairs. Many of these assimilated Jews have risen to the highest positions in commercial, industrial, and professional life, and their numbers are constantly increasing.

In WESTERN GALICIA the population is almost entirely Polish, as the Poles, who have increased by very nearly 2 per cent. during the last thirty years, represent about 90 per cent. of the total numbers. The Ruthenians amount to about  $2\frac{3}{4}$  per cent., and the rest of the population—after deducting about 1 per cent. of Germans—consists of unassimilated Jews (about  $6\frac{1}{4}$  per cent.).

Whereas the percentage of the Ruthenians remains stationary, and the Germans are decreasing—not only relatively but in actual numbers—the Poles are increasing both numerically and relatively.

<sup>1</sup> "Yiddish," a sort of corrupt German mixed with Hebrew.

Most of the Ruthenians inhabit the eastern parts of Western Galicia, and the mountainous districts bordering on Hungary, where their numbers amount in some parts to 25 per cent. of the entire population.

The majority of the Jews inhabit the towns, where also most of the German inhabitants of the province are to be found.

In EASTERN GALICIA the nationalities are very mixed, for although on the whole the Ruthenians predominate, there are districts in which the Poles are in a decided majority. Generally speaking the western districts are more Polish and the eastern more Ruthenian, but the latter nationality nowhere represents more than 80 per cent. of the local population. The Poles, on the other hand, whose numbers amount to about 35 per cent. of the entire population of Eastern Galicia, represent in some parts of the western districts of the province as much as 88 per cent. They are also very numerous in the neighbourhood of Lemberg, where their numbers amount to 85 per cent., and, still farther east, in the exceedingly fertile districts of Galician Podolia. Here, in the neighbourhood of Tarnopol, Skalat, and Trembovla, the Poles represent 52 per cent. of the entire population of these districts, and the proportion is not much lower in other parts of this territory.

The Jews are more numerous in Eastern Galicia than in the western portion of the province,

representing about 12 per cent. of the entire population ; but this figure includes the assimilated minority who, from the point of view of nationality, must be regarded as Poles.

The nineteenth century saw a revival of the national spirit among the Ruthenians who had, through the popularization of education, evolved an intellectual class of their own.

Unfortunately the Ruthenian national movement is too young for its adherents to have a well-defined programme. One section claims Eastern Galicia exclusively for the Ruthenians, and has in some instances—encouraged by the Austrian Government—taken up a hostile attitude towards the Poles.

Another section of the Ruthenian population desires union with Russia. This section has comparatively very few adherents, and its ambition is not likely to be realized, as the majority of the Ruthenians are strongly opposed to the idea on religious grounds.

The Ruthenians of Galicia are nearly all Uniats, i.e. members of that portion of the Greek Church which in 1595 became united with the See of Rome. A very small proportion (0·03 per cent.) belong to the independent Greek communion, or Eastern Church, which must not be confounded with the Russian Orthodox Church.

There is, from a national point of view, a certain resemblance between Silesia and Eastern Galicia, as the Ruthenians in the latter province—like the

Poles in the former—belong almost exclusively to the rural, intellectually and materially less favoured portion of the population.

The Ruthenians are of higher stature than the Poles and have somewhat darker hair and eyes, which does not mean, however, that they are dark-complexioned. On the contrary, the light type is in a slight majority; very dark people are rare among both Poles and Ruthenians.

## RUSSIAN POLAND

THE Polish territories which form part of the RUSSIAN POSSESSIONS consist of the Kingdom of Poland (a name created in 1815), Lithuania, Volhynia, Podolia, and the Ukraina.

In the KINGDOM OF POLAND the majority of the inhabitants are of Polish nationality; but besides this principal national group there are five others, namely: the Lithuanian, Jewish, German, Ruthenian, and Russian groups.

Classified according to religion the population falls into four groups: the great Roman Catholic majority, the comparatively small Jewish group, and the insignificant Protestant and Russian Orthodox groups.

The majority of the Poles belong to the Roman Catholic faith, as also do the Lithuanians—the latter almost without exception, although a small number are to this day Mohammedans.

To the Russian Orthodox faith belong the Russians and Ruthenians; the latter only since 1875 when the Uniat Church, of which they were members, was abolished by the Government, and its adherents enrolled, against their will, as members of the Orthodox Church. Since the publication,

in 1905, of the ukase granting religious freedom to all Russian subjects, large numbers of the Ruthenians have joined the Roman Catholic Church.

The Germans in the Kingdom are nearly all Protestants, the Catholics among them forming a small minority. Among the Protestants are also to be found a good many Poles, and still more among the Jews, of whom considerable numbers have become assimilated—at least as far as language is concerned. A small percentage of Poles is to be found even among the members of the Russian Orthodox Church.

The only census taken in the Kingdom of Poland on modern lines was the census of 1897, and that, being a first attempt, could not in any case have given unassailable results. They were made the more unreliable by the fact that the census was not by any means carried out on impartial lines, the tendency being, on the contrary, to make the numbers of the Poles appear as small as possible.

A proof of the unreliability of the figures obtained, with regard to nationality, is the fact that the numbers of the Roman Catholics coincide with the total numbers of Poles and Lithuanians. In reality the Poles are much more numerous, as large numbers are members of other religious communities. These would, however, appear to have been classified as Germans if they were Protestants, Jews if they professed the Jewish faith, and Ruthenians or Russians if they belonged to the Russian Church. Even the Catholic Poles were

not all classified as such, a considerable proportion appearing as Lithuanians.

Such a system of classification would naturally tend to lower the Polish majority, which is still further decreased by the inclusion of the military population. As the garrisons are composed entirely of men from non-Polish districts, whilst the Poles are sent to Russia for the time of their military service, the relative numbers of the Poles are thus twice reduced.

The latest figures obtainable on the population of the Kingdom of Poland are those issued by the Warsaw Statistical Committee for 1913, according to which, after deducting the garrisons, the proportions of the various religious communities to the entire population were as follows: Roman Catholics 76 per cent., Jews 15 per cent., Protestants 5·3 per cent., Orthodox 3·7 per cent. These figures are, however, not quite reliable.

According to the calculations of the best authorities, the various nationalities in the Kingdom of Poland were in 1910 represented in the following proportions: Poles 80 per cent., Jews 11 per cent., Germans 4 per cent., Lithuanians 2·3 per cent., Ruthenians 2 per cent., Russians 0·7 per cent.

The Ruthenian population of the Kingdom is to be found mainly in the districts of the governments of Lublin and Siedltse bordering on Volhynia. These districts have of recent years been incorporated in the newly formed government of Chelm.

The Lithuanians inhabit the northern portion of the government of Suvalki—the north-eastern part of the Kingdom. This territory stretches along the left bank of the Niemen to within no great distance of the sea, and it may be mentioned that the Prussian districts situated on that river are also inhabited by Lithuanians.

Considerable numbers of German settlers are to be found in the governments of Suvalki and Chelm, amounting in the former to about  $5\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. of the entire population. In the government of Chelm the Germans are, with few exceptions, all to be found in the vicinity of the town of that name, where they represent about  $12\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. of the inhabitants. Besides in the governments mentioned, considerable numbers of Germans are to be found in those of Plotsk, Warsaw, Kalish, and Piotrkov. In the district of Lodz (in the last-named government) the numbers of the Germans amount to as much as 26 per cent. of the local population.

The Jews are most numerous in the city of Warsaw, where they represent nearly 37 per cent. of the inhabitants, although their numbers for the whole government of Warsaw do not amount to more than 11·4 per cent. In proportion to the population of the whole province the Jews are most numerous in the governments of Lomza, Siedltse, and Piotrkov, where they represent on an average about 16 per cent. of the entire population. The largest proportion of Jews is to be found in the small provincial towns, where their numbers

amount to 45 per cent. of the total number of inhabitants.

The Jewish population of the Kingdom of Poland—and more especially of Warsaw—has greatly increased of recent years in consequence of the expulsion of great numbers of Jews from Russia. Besides this economic conditions have forced a great many Jews to emigrate from Lithuania, and the majority of these too have settled down in Poland, chiefly in Warsaw.

The influx of great numbers of a foreign element, with alien sympathies and ideals, could not fail to have unpleasant results, and has led to Polono-Jewish conflicts.

The Russians in Poland are not only an immigrant, but also, for the greater part, a migratory population, consisting chiefly of Government officials of all classes, with their families; the families of the military; and representatives of Russian business firms. For the higher officials service in Poland is merely a step to promotion in the official hierarchy of the empire, but for all it means a better income, as Government officials "of Russian origin" receive, when serving in Poland, comparatively large allowances in addition to their salaries.

The population of LITHUANIA consists of Poles, Lithuanians, Ruthenians, White-Ruthenians, Russians, Letts, and Jews.

This province was among the first of the Polish

territories to be detached from the Commonwealth, and it is here that the Polish nation has suffered the greatest losses.

The civilization of Lithuania is Polish, and the Poles formerly constituted a very large and important part of the population ; but their numbers have been greatly reduced by the abolition of the Uniat Church, and in consequence of the deportation of great numbers of Poles, and confiscation of Polish territory, after the insurrection of 1863. Everything Polish was then banned, Polish schools, theatres, the Press, and even shop signs were suppressed, and the use of the Polish language prohibited.

In Lithuania it is even more difficult than in the Kingdom to obtain accurate statistical information regarding the nationalities of the population, as even the official figures of the various Government departments vary considerably. For instance, whereas the Orthodox population of Vilno, according to the census returns, numbered 14,312 in 1897, the official figure for 1909 was 27,619, by which it would appear that this section of the population of Vilno had, in the short time of twelve years, nearly doubled. The Consistory of the Orthodox Church, on the other hand, which surely is the best authority on the subject, gave the numbers for 1909 as amounting to 6,522, including 361 members of the Old-Orthodox faith—an independent sect.

Another illustration of the unreliability of official

figures is the district of Sokol, which borders on the Kingdom and is undoubtedly, ethnographically, Polish territory. According to the census of 1897 the Polish population of this district numbered, at that time, 1,273 souls, and for 1909 the official figure was 1,047, but a petition presented in 1905 to Count Witte by the Polish inhabitants of the district contained 11,653 signatures.

The above example suffices to show that the majority of the Poles must, in the official statistics, have been classified among other nationalities, and the statistics on religions give some indication where to look for them.

According to calculations based on information drawn from various official sources, the proportion of Poles to the entire population in the governments of Lithuania was, in 1909, as follows: Kovno, 8 per cent., Vilno 47·1 per cent., Grodno 25·3 per cent., Minsk 8·4 per cent., Vitebsk 7·9 per cent., Mohilev 3·3 per cent. These figures appear in many instances to be considerably below the real percentage; according to the calculations of Polish statisticians the Poles in the government of Kovno, for instance, actually represented 11·4 per cent. of the entire population.

In one-half the districts of Lithuania the Poles are more numerous than any of the other nationalities inhabiting them—in a few cases representing as much as 71 per cent. of the local population—and in all portions of the territory they constitute an important section.

The Lithuanians represent above 46 per cent. of the entire population of Lithuania, and are most numerous in the government of Kovno where their numbers amount to 66 per cent. Considerable numbers of Lithuanians are also to be found in the neighbouring province of Courland, and in East Prussia.

The majority of the White-Ruthenians inhabit the governments of Minsk and Mohilev, and the eastern part of the Vitebsk government, where they constitute about 66 per cent. of the population. These districts are very thinly populated—especially Polesia—the soil being poor, and the climatic conditions unfavourable to its cultivation on an extensive scale. The inhabitants are in a very backward state of civilization, only 17 per cent. being able to read or write. The proportion of the White-Ruthenians to the entire population of Lithuania is 43 per cent.

The Letts inhabit the western portion of the government of Vitebsk (Polish Livonia) and the eastern part of Courland. They differ from the other Letts who inhabit the rest of Courland and the formerly Swedish part of Livonia (with whom they have little intercourse) in that they are Roman Catholics. These Lithuanian Letts call themselves Lathgolians ; they have a local dialect, use Roman characters in writing—whereas the other Letts, having come completely under German influence, employ German characters—and make use of the Polish language in their prayers. The Lathgolians

represent about 48 per cent. of the entire population of the districts they inhabit, and about 18 per cent. of the population of the government of Vitebsk.

The Jews in Lithuania amount to about 14 per cent. of the entire population, and are to be found in all parts of the province, chiefly in the towns. In consequence of unfavourable economic conditions large numbers of Jews emigrate, some to the Kingdom of Poland, the majority to America, and the inhabitants of some of the small towns in Lithuania maintain themselves almost entirely on the money sent them by the emigrants.

The Mohammedans number altogether only about 10,000, or 0·09 per cent. of the entire population of Lithuania. They are descended from Tartars who, invited in the Middle Ages by the Grand Duke Witold to assist him in his wars with the German knights, afterwards settled down here. They intermarried with the local inhabitants, and the members of the upper classes among them adopted the Polish language and became loyal Poles. The others adopted either the Lithuanian or Ruthenian tongue, according to the district in which they settled down.

In physical proportions the Letts greatly resemble the Poles, but they have darker hair and eyes—the latter frequently being greenish in colour. The Lithuanians are somewhat taller than the Letts, and the majority are fair-haired and have light blue or grey eyes, in which respect they resemble the Poles. The Mohammedans are shorter and of slighter build than the other inhabitants of

Lithuania, and they are also of a darker complexion.

The inhabitants of the populous provinces of VOLHYNIA, PODOLIA, and the UKRAINA—famous for the fertility of their soil—are engaged mostly in agricultural pursuits, three-fourths of the population being either landowners or peasants.

The majority of the inhabitants of these provinces are Ruthenians, but they owe their development in a great measure to the Poles. The latter have here played a similar part to that of the Swedes in Finland, having organized the country politically, economically, and socially. The influence of the Poles is therefore not in proportion to their numbers, although these are by no means inconsiderable.

The Ruthenians still apply the name "Poland" to all the territories west of the Dnieper, and consider the Poles as children of the soil equally with themselves. Their favourite formula to define their own nationality was "gente Ruthenus, natione Polonus."

Notwithstanding the length of time (120 years) that Volhynia, Podolia, and the Ukraina have been separated from Poland, all efforts to efface their Polish character have been in vain. Even the confiscation, on a large scale, of Polish property, and deportation of great numbers of Poles after the revolutions of 1831 and 1863, have not been able to effect that aim.

The numbers of the Poles constitute about  $7\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. of the population of these provinces, and they are most numerous in Volhynia, where they represent  $10\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. The majority are landed proprietors, owning in some districts as much as 90 per cent. of the areas covered by the large estates, and representing a very valuable element, as they are very progressive, and introduce all the latest agricultural improvements into the country.

Of the whole area covered by the nine governments of Lithuania and Ruthenia 47 per cent. is in the hands of the Poles. A good many Poles are to be found too among the peasantry, especially in the districts bordering on Galicia (and in northern Podolia generally) as well as in Volhynia. Many of these Polish peasants are the descendants of nobles who were degraded after the revolution of 1831.

The Poles also form an important section of the urban population of these provinces—as they represent the intellectual element—but the bulk of the inhabitants of the towns is composed of Jews, who amount to nearly 13 per cent. of the population of Volhynia, Podolia, and the Ukraina.

The towns, being the administrative centres of the Russian authorities, also contain the greater part of the Russian population of these provinces—consisting, again, mostly of Government officials.

As will be seen by the foregoing, the territories formerly constituting the Commonwealth of Poland

—together with the Polish parts of Silesia, Prussia, and Upper Hungary—possess many characteristic features. The Poles are numerous in all parts of these territories, in many districts forming an overwhelming majority. What is more, they have everywhere left indelible marks of their civilization, which all the efforts of the ruling powers have not been able to efface, even in the districts where the Poles are least numerous.

So long as the territories belonged to Poland harmony prevailed among all the nationalities inhabiting them—complications have arisen only since the partitions of Poland, which have had nothing but painful consequences for the country.

It is to be hoped that the good relations between all these nationalities, apart from small local quarrels which are bound to arrive whenever two or more nationalities inhabit the same territory, will be maintained and that they will all have an opportunity of a free national development. There is a community of interest between the Poles, Lithuanians, and Ruthenians. They have been bound together for centuries. Poland cannot look indifferently on the fate of its neighbours. An independent Poland would mean a free Lithuania and a free Ruthenia.

A century and a half of oppression have not been able to destroy the vitality or moral strength of the Polish people. Every new endeavour to crush them has only strengthened their determination and

power of endurance—and the country is as Polish as ever.

That the present war can have only one result for Poland is clear from Sir Edward Grey's words in the Bechstein Hall, on March 22, 1915: "We wish the nations of Europe to be free to live their independent lives, working out their own forms of government, for themselves and their own development, whether they be great States or small States, in full liberty—that is our ideal."

If Poland were not to regain its independence as a result of this struggle, England would have failed in her mission to vindicate the principle that oppressed nationalities "are not to be crushed by the arbitrary will of a strong and overmastering power," and "to help them in their struggle for freedom, whether as in the case of Belgium in maintaining what they have won, or, as in the case of Poland or the Balkan States, in REGAINING WHAT THEY HAVE LOST" (Mr. Asquith, October 3, 1914, and August 6, 1915).

EXTENT AND POPULATION OF POLISH TERRITORIES  
AND TOTAL NUMBER OF POLES.

Name of Territory.	Date.	Extent in square miles.	Total population.	Density of population per square mile.	Number of Poles.	Percentage of Poles.
<b>I. PRUSSIAN POSSESSIONS</b>						
Grand Duchy of Posen	1910.	11,191	2,099,831	187.6	1,291,153	61.5
West Prussia	...	9,864	1,703,474	172.8	602,234	35.4
Regency of Olshtyn in E. Prussia	...	4,643	543,469	117.5	267,831	49.3
Upper Silesia	...	5,107	2,207,981	432.3	1,258,138	57.0
<b>II. AUSTRIAN POSSESSIONS</b>						
Galicia	1910	30,300	8,029,387	264.9	4,675,612	58.6
Dist. of Teschin, Austrian Silesia	1900	881	361,015	409.7	218,869	60.9
Upper Hungary (Spiz)...	—	—	—	—	100,000	80
<b>III. RUSSIAN POSSESSIONS</b>						
Kingdom of Poland	...	49,003	11,935,318	243.5	9,074,382	76.1
Lithuania	...	117,281	11,442,311	97.6	1,566,540	13.6
Volhynia	...	27,691	3,367,300	120	298,110	8.8
Podolia	...	1909	16,219	3,394,654	262,738	8.7
Ukraine	...	1909	19,670	4,429,542	106,733	3
Courland	...	—	—	—	29,258	4
<b>IV. OTHER PARTS OF THE WORLD</b>						
America	...	—	—	—	3,200,000	—
Other Countries...	...	—	—	—	1,000,000	—
<b>Total</b>	...	—	291,850	49,514,282	—	23,951,598

The Poles are the sixth nation in Europe as regards numbers, ranking next to the Italians.

\* Last obtainable official figures. For more accurate data see p. 127.

# **POLAND AS AN INDEPENDENT ECONOMIC UNIT**

**BEING A LECTURE DELIVERED AT THE  
“ECOLE DES HAUTES ETUDES SOCIALES,”  
PARIS, JANUARY 29, 1916**

**BY  
STANISLAW POSNER**

**With an Introduction by  
SIDNEY WEBB**



## INTRODUCTION

I GLADLY comply with the invitation to contribute a few words of preface to Mr. Stanislaw Posner's impressive account of the material resources of Poland. The series projected by the Polish Information Committee is badly needed in this country. Fate has, indeed, been hard on Poland. So far as the United Kingdom is concerned, it has not only fallen out of the maps from which we learn how Europe is made up—it has fallen also out of our knowledge. We get, if only through the Stock Exchange, some idea of the industrial resources and economic exploitation of Mexico and Persia; but we read very little about the enormous and astonishing material development between the Oder and the Dwina, within a couple of days' travel from London. We realize the rapid growth of Chicago and Winnipeg and Oklahoma; but forget that of Lodz, where a city which began to grow only half a century ago now counts 800,000 inhabitants. How many Englishmen realize that Lodz has become more populous than either Liverpool or Manchester? How many Scotchmen are prepared to find it as a manufacturing centre vying with Glasgow? But the mineral resources of Poland are greater even than its manufactures. The oil and salt and coal and iron with which Poland now supplies Europe constitute no small percentage of the total world resources. After the war these will necessarily play an important part in any rearrangement of European trade.

No one can pretend to foresee how the political organization of this part of Europe is destined to be affected during the rest of the century. But the economic student will find it difficult to resist the conclusion that, in the ever-increasing industrialization of the country, any attempt to maintain tariff walls across the Polish plain—any seeking to set up industrial frontiers between the Carpathians and the Baltic, between the Oder and the Dwina—will be a violation of what may be called social geography, likely to lead to instability and disaster. Whether economic geography will silently influence political geography, or political geography once more coerce economic, who can tell? Perhaps our Kings and Emperors, and their military and fiscal advisers, may one day learn that there is no necessary identity between unbroken customs areas and units of administrative autonomy. The map of Europe may be destined to become not less complex but more—may come, in fact, in the distant future, to be painted not with one series of colours denoting absolute and universal sovereignties, but with different sets of colours, designating simultaneously existing and often overlapping units relating respectively to race, religion and language, to fiscal administration, to local government, to systems of law, and to the administration of transport and communications. Why should these all be compelled to coincide? Why should we go on for all time assuming that Sovereignty must be one and indivisible, and that Political Sovereignty must necessarily be not only the dominant but also the only controlling influence?

SIDNEY WEBB.

## POLAND AS AN INDEPENDENT ECONOMIC UNIT

THE history of a people is inseparable from the country in which they live. The Greeks are for ever associated with the Hellenic seas, the French with France, the English with their own island.

Has Poland a personality of her own? Has she a personality in the profound sense employed by Michelet, who spoke of the personality of his own great country France?

A geographical individuality is not merely the result of simple considerations of geology and climate. It is not a thing given by nature from the beginning. It is wrong, says M. Vidal de la Blache, to regard a country as a store-house in which energy is stored, the germ of which has been

placed there by nature, but the development of which depends on man. It is man who, in moulding a country to his use, places upon it the seal of his individuality ; it is in this way that a country differentiates itself from others, and becomes finally, as it were, as a medal struck with the effigy of a people.

Geography determines the nature of a people's activity and social life. The variety of the resources which they have at their disposal, their food, their dwellings, and tools, in short their economic activity—all these are due to the geological constituents of the soil.

When the war broke out Poland was divided into three parts. These three divisions of the old Polish Republic were separated by customs duties ; for two there was no access to the sea. Contact and economic exchange with Western Europe were only possible by railway communications and by the Vistula, the only waterway flowing to the sea. In each of these three divisions there was a different legislative and administrative system.

Nevertheless, we claim that Poland is still a united nation. Her partition was not only a crime against the people of Poland, but against the laws of nature, of geology, and of geography. For this very reason the question has remained unsolved for one hundred and fifty years. When the three divisions are united once more, Poland will resume her interrupted national life.

The country is called "Poland," "Polonia," in Latin, in Polish "Polska," which means the country of plains (*pole* = plain). This name conveys the idea of limitless space. Poland has a central position in Europe. If one line is drawn from Portugal almost to the Ural Mountains and another from the Island of Crete to the North Cape, they will intersect in the plain of Poland. Poland is the country of transition from the west to the east, from the north to the south. From the west to the east the Germanic plain extends to that of Sarmatia; this is analogous to the situation of Belgium between France and Germany. The geographical situation of both countries has been responsible for similar historical phenomena; both have been the battlefield of the nations, as is shown by Waterloo and Grunwald.

In the north the frontier of Poland is clearly defined by the shores of the Baltic, in the south by the granite walls of the Carpathians, while in the west the country extends to the River Oder, of which Frederick Barbarossa said, "Poloniam velut murus ambit" (it flanks Poland like a wall). In fact, the right bank of the Oder is called by the riverside dwellers the Polish shore.

On the east the frontier is not so clearly defined, at least not as regards the Black Sea, the Dnieper, which makes a bend there, and the Dwina—in short, the very line which, according to a Ruthenian chronicler, constituted "the great riverway leading from the country of the Varegues into Greece. This line

is not continuous, at least it is only made so by the canal system of Beresina.

This, then, is the frame which encloses the country. As the poet said : "The Polish eagle has her resting-place on the peaks of the Carpathians, and stretches forth her wings, one to the Baltic, the other to the Black Sea."

From these geographical facts one could almost deduce, *a priori*, the history of the country. Situated on the borders of the East, Poland defends Western Europe : she is like the Wall of China or the rampart of Trajan. She is, as it were, a political isthmus, a dyke upon which the peoples of the Orient beat like waves, in their endeavours to flow westward ; on the other side she stemmed the tide of the Germanic peoples from the shores of the Atlantic. The defence of these two fronts was such a serious drain on the strength of the nation that she could not protect her maritime boundaries to the south and north from the encroachments of nature. On the north access to the sea was made difficult by a line of lakes, bordered by a wooded and marshy country inhabited by a warlike Lithuanian tribe. (It was this obstacle that induced her to seek the help of the Teutonic Knights.) Germanic pressure made itself more felt here ; the left wing of the invader was protected by the Baltic ; his communications with the sea were ensured. Moreover, from this coast the country was equally menaced by the Swede. On the southern maritime boundary vast

desolate plains hindered Poland from guarding her seaboard, and on these shores wandering tribes from Asia took up their abode, Turks and Tartars. In the sixteenth century a Polish author asserted : "On all sides of the country an easy means of ingress is afforded to our enemies. The Turkish cavalry manœuvre as they will. They advance, retreat, dash forward, take prisoners, and secure a huge booty. As for us, our only defence lies in our strength and valour. These take the place of mountains, rivers, castles, and ramparts."

The south-west part of Poland is very rich in coal of an excellent quality, in iron, in steel, in zinc ; lead is found in all the three divisions of Poland. Coal is found in one large field, which is split up between the three States, each of which exploits it in a different manner. The area of this field is estimated by geologists at about 2,316 square miles, half of which belongs to Prussia. The seams are 327 yards thick, and can be worked to a depth of 185 yards. In 1908 the reserve of coal in Poland was estimated at 110,000,000,000 tons. Upper Silesia possesses 56 mines employing 90,000 men. These mines belong to the Germans. In the Kingdom of Poland the mines are for the most part the property of joint-stock companies run by foreign capital—French, American, German, Russian, but also Polish. The net profit of these mines, 26 in number, employing 20,000 workmen, for the last eight years has been £5,000,000. The amount of coal produced in Poland is sufficient

to supply all France with her 40,000,000 inhabitants and the large fuel consumption of her industries.

The industrial development of a country may be measured by its iron industry. The reserve of iron of the Kingdom is valued at £1,000,000,000. In 1909, 1,228,500 tons of iron-ore were extracted and 4,258,800 smelted. The Polish iron-works deal with a great quantity of iron-ore from Southern Russia. On the other hand, Poland provides Russia with sufficient zinc for all her requirements. The zinc mines of Olkusz were being worked as early as the sixteenth century. Polish calamine was known in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in every market of the world. The yearly production is 100,000 tons. In the same district there are lead mines. Until recently the largest quantity of zinc came from Upper Silesia. Her output was 208,000 tons—as much as all the other countries of Europe added together. The production of the United States alone—226,000 tons—is in excess of this.

A new industry is that of petrol, exploited by foreign syndicates. In addition to oil for lighting purposes, raw petrol furnishes benzine, paraffin, and vaseline. It is equally in use as a combustible by mines and railways. The Polish petrol wells are situated in Galicia: the first experiments with petrol were made in 1810. At Lwow (Lemberg) in 1853, two chemists discovered a process by which carburet could be obtained from petrol, and

in 1856 it was used for the first time for lighting the municipal hospital of the capital of Galicia. Eminent Polish scientists, Zuber, Grzybowski, Szajnocha, Dunikowski, all professors of the Universities of Cracow and Lwow, have made themselves known throughout the world by their works dealing with the petrol industry. In Galicia the petrol fields extend from the valley of the Dounayetz as far as the Bukovina—a distance of 248 miles. In 1912, petrol was being exploited in 389 places. Professor Zuber has calculated that petrol-bearing land in Galicia extends for a distance of 19,760 acres, and contains at least 470,000 tons of raw petrol.

Salt is among the mineral products which received a great deal of attention in the country in days gone by. There are references to the salt mines of Bochnia and Wieliczka as early as the middle of the twelfth century; mention is made of them among the royal privileges granted to the Benedictine and Cistercian monasteries in 1105 and 1136. These mines stretch from the Silesian frontier throughout Galicia and Bukovina to Roumania.

After the partition of the country they became the property of the Austrian State, and were worked—very inefficiently—by a State monopoly. At the time of the existence of the Duchy of Warsaw, the output of salt reached 2,000 tons per annum. It is only 1,000 now, although the consumption of salt has increased everywhere in

the feeding of men and animals, as well as in chemical industries. The mines of Wieliczka are very interesting to visit ; they have fascinated many a foreign visitor by their lighting *a giorno*, and by the singing of the miners. Western Galicia also possesses rich stores of potash, a chemical manure of inestimable value in modern agriculture, above all in the production of beetroot. But the mines of Galicia are also administered by the Austrian State, and instead of selling chemical manures, Galicia imports 5,000 wagons every year, and salt is dearer there than in Switzerland, who has to import all her supply.

Knowing the riches of the Polish soil, more than one French chemist has insisted that the chemical industries of Poland should develop to an extraordinary extent, especially in Galicia, where salt, petrol, coal, and wood are so plentiful. Industries for the production of glass, soap, perfumes, and pharmaceutical requirements should be set up ; yet all these industries still await a creator. This stagnation may be ascribed to political causes, to the exploitation of the country by Germany and Austria. The mineral springs must also be counted among the mineral riches of Poland. They abound in great numbers. There are the sulpho-chlorine springs of Busk, chloro-soda of Ciechocinek, and of Druskienniki in Lithuania ; iodo-bromide ferruginous alkaline springs are found all along the Carpathians. Statistics of brine-baths mention 39 thermal institutions, four of which are by the sea.

Hundreds of climacteric establishments swarm in the villages on the mountain sides, great sanatoria for tuberculosis, rivalling those of Switzerland, and lastly the treatment by "Koumys" at Slawuta in Volhynia should not be forgotten.

In enumerating the natural riches of the country, certain facts have been introduced concerning the coal, petrol, salt, and zinc industries. In Silesia the industries of the greatest importance are those of mining and iron-founding. The number of workmen employed in the latter in Prussian Silesia is reckoned at 500,000. The textile industry and the spinning mills employ 54,000. In the Duchy of Posen industrial development met with many obstacles. German competition holds the whole province as in a vice. The authorities support German industry in the struggle against the new-born Polish activity ; the Polish business man is boycotted as much as the artisan ; and German banks refuse to give them credit. In spite of all these obstacles, the makers of agricultural machinery compete with German manufacturers, and succeed in gaining the first prize at international exhibitions.

Industrial beginnings in the kingdom of Poland are very early. There are proofs of their existence at the time of the Jagellons. The storms which have swept the country, the Swedish invasions and the rule of the Saxon kings, have by degrees brought them to a standstill. But towards the end of the eighteenth century, a new spirit manifested

itself in Poland, an initiative springing from the desire to reconstruct the country, and to save it from final dissolution. In her search after the means of salvation Poland endeavoured to resuscitate her once flourishing industries.

In 1786 the "Journal of Commerce," published at Warsaw, wrote: "Look at any Polish lord or lady; everything they wear is of foreign manufacture." Nobles such as the Malachowski, the Radziwill, the Tyzenhaus, began to start industries. The English traveller Coxe, who visited them, wrote in this connection: "The principal manufactures are those of cloths, stuffs, linen, cotton, silk, embroideries, silk stockings, hats, lace, firearms, needles, and playing cards."

Before the third partition there were in Poland 255 factories, not counting saw-mills, tan-yards and distilleries. Political tempests, which had annihilated Polish independence, did not succeed in destroying the spirit of initiative. It still existed under the ashes, and before life again resumed its normal course, before a single ray had illuminated the country, lighting up the hope of ultimate self-government, endeavours were being made to create a new industrial system. The Kingdom of the Congress had only to carry forward the work commenced at the close of the eighteenth century. All serfs were made free by the Code Napoléon. The proletariat had been enfranchised and workmen were to be had in abundance. It was necessary to make sure of the capital required

and to find a market for the goods. In 1805 a new scale of tariffs was introduced, which raised the price of imported articles. Immigrants were attracted by privileges, such as freedom from military service and the non-payment of taxes for six years. All necessary materials were given them for the construction of their factories. In 1820 a commission noted the towns and boroughs which appeared suitable for the erection of factories. A long-term-loan fund was established for industrial enterprises (starting in 1824 at £12,000 per annum). The institution of this fund was the work of the Polish Minister of Finance, Prince Lubecki. In this way the celebrated cloth of Coqueril saw the light of day ; it was produced in the cotton factory of a French engineer named Girard, whose memory is immortalized by the place bearing his name—Zyrardow. Lubecki grasped the fact that industrial life is impossible without credit, and he therefore founded the Bank of Poland. Agriculture, ruined by the fatal intrigues of the Prussian rule, was also in need of help ; the Prussians had been masters of the country from 1796 to 1807. In 1825 the Polish Land Bank was founded. Two years later Lubecki put up for sale the mortgages on land issued by the Land Bank on national property. These duties brought in 3,000,000 Polish florins, and with this money Lubecki set up the Bank of Poland, whose aim was the development of commerce, credit, and industry. The normal causes of this extraordinary revival were found above all

in the enterprise of the people, and in the political liberty arising from self-government, which had been given to the country by the Congress of Vienna of 1815. The Bank of Poland was more than a powerful institution for credit. After the disasters of the revolution it was owing to this bank that national industry, still in its infancy, did not disappear for ever ; it restored enterprises which were sinking, and put them on their feet again. It was the first great organizer of national industry. The Land Bank of Poland has been mentioned, but it should be added that this institution was the father of the Land Bank of France, which was not only set up on the same lines, but was founded by a Pole, M. Louis Wolowski, who became, in 1830, a professor at the "Conservatoire des Arts et Métiers." He had seen in his own country the work of the Land Bank and was astonished not to see a similar institution in France ; he worked for many years (from 1835) to convince the French economists and financiers of the necessity of setting up a similar institution. After years of laborious propaganda in the Press and at the Constituent Assembly of 1848, the Land Bank of France was finally set up in 1852.<sup>1</sup>

Attracted by the freedom accorded to immigrants, ten thousand colonists with their families, artisans and spinners, installed themselves at Lodz, at Zgierz, at Pabianice, Zyrardow and Ozorkow. They brought with them a perfection of technique, the

<sup>1</sup> A. Rouillet, "L. Wolowski." Paris, 1881.

product of assiduous toil. They became a great factor in the economic and social development of the country. The favourable condition of the tariffs also materially contributed to the industrial prosperity of the country. The Congress of Vienna had guaranteed absolute freedom of commerce between the Kingdom of Poland and the Polish provinces of Prussia and Austria. Commerce was equally unrestricted (up to 1882) between Poland and Lithuania, Volhynia, Podolia, and the Ukraine. Polish merchants travelled freely through Russia. After 1830 self-government was suppressed. A new system was established which was very unfavourable to Polish industry. Here it was that the Bank of Poland intervened. In Lodz, industry made great strides. In 1835 machines worked by steam were introduced, railways in 1848. Russia did away with the tariff as regards Poland in 1859, and so opened a way for Polish commerce into Russia and Asia. The peasant reform threw an abundance of labour on the market; not all the peasants had been endowed with land, and so thousands drifted into the towns. From 1850 to 1870 the value of Polish manufactures has increased sixfold.

In 1877 Russia abandoned her old system of tariffs. Under the protectionist regime Lodz had succeeded wonderfully. The well-known English economist Hobson calculated (in 1894) the proportion in which the towns of Europe had increased in size. In the case of Glasgow this increase

amounted to 970 per cent., of Berlin 660 per cent., of Lodz 1,361 per cent. Foreign capital, French, English, and above all German, flowed in abundance into the country. In the district of Sosnowice, and in Czestochowa, which even up to the middle of the nineteenth century was merely a hunting ground, the resort of Silesian magnates, on account of its richness in game, industry made a tremendous advance in a very short time. Great industrial towns arose where, hitherto, there had been only pine forests and desolate sand-dunes. Such towns are found in America; their sole monument is a factory chimney, they are without traditions. Sumptuous palaces set at defiance the misery that exists around them. These are the towns which suck into their whirlpool millions of souls, and bring forth millionaires with the multitude of their riches.

Lodz is an enormous city, whose sole claim to beauty lies in the dignity of immense industrial undertakings. Day and night there is ceaseless activity. Masters and men alike bow before the implacable rod of labour, in this city of 800,000 working population. The strident call of the siren awakes the people from sleep and calls them to rest. It is also the passing bell of the dead, the regulator of the whole life of the community. In the streets, dragging huge trucks laden with cotton or wool, surges a vast throng. Every race, language, and religion is represented here. In 1895, out of every hundred only forty-two were natives of Lodz.

In 1900 Lodz contained a population of 227,000 workmen. She was the new Colchis ; towards her the Argonauts of the world set sail. The fame of this wonder-city was noised abroad, in which "the possibilities were unlimited." Towards the land of promise turned beggars, capitalists, manufacturers, German merchants, peasants, Jews, impoverished noblemen of Russia. In the infernal struggle round the Golden Fleece many made their fortunes, many more died in the attempt.

The whole country stretching to the German frontier became one vast factory. From Nowo-Radomsk and Czestochowa, which is famous throughout the Catholic world for the miraculous image of Our Lady, and is at the same time a great industrial centre ; from these towns to the frontier there is nothing but a forest of immense chimneys. Nowo-Radomsk has a furniture factory, whose products are called in Paris "Viennese" furniture ; Rudniki, lime and cement works ; Czestochowa, great factories for textile and metal goods. The metal trade is predominant in Myszkow, textiles in Zawiercie. Then comes the mining industry of Sosnowice and Dombrowa. This land of factories is only divided by the German, Austrian, and Russian frontiers, across which numberless wagons pass daily. Thousands of artisans cross during the fête-day from Sosnowice, which is in Russia, to Katowice, which is in Germany. On both sides of the frontier there is the same race. They are all Poles by the great universal law of assimilation,

split up by artificial means, waiting only for liberty to weld themselves again into a composite whole. For thirty years the language of commerce was German. Only German was heard in the streets. The workers spoke German, read books in the same tongue. The papers were published in German. Master and man alike were in the pay of foreigners, for the most part Germans. Gradually there appeared Polish engineers, doctors, and lawyers; Polish capital made its first halting attempts to finance industrial enterprises. This was the commencement of the nationalization of the towns of Lodz, Sosnowice, and Dambrowa. This movement was not encouraged by the Government; and it had many difficulties to surmount before the path was clear. Before a corrupt administration, the alliance of the bureaucracy and German capital, it was almost powerless.

Polish products had been available for a long time in the markets of the interior—Polish, Lithuanian, and Podolian. After Russia became linked to Poland by railways, Lodz commenced to export to the markets of the East (about 1880). Her exports penetrated southward to the Caucasus, and into Transcaucasia. They invaded Central Russia and the country of the Volga. In 1895 Polish products reached as far as Omsk in Siberia, China, Central Asia, Persia, and Asia Minor. In the Constantinople market they were faced with German competition, and on the Balcanic market with that of Austria. In the course of a few years com-

mercial travellers from Lodz were to be met in Spain and in South Africa. Since 1870 the textile industries of Poland have increased 700 per cent. There are 3,000 factories in existence, large and small, employing 289,000 workmen.

Two words concerning the metal industry—in 1814 there were 46 furnaces for casting iron. The Polish minister Lubecki set up the first metal works in Warsaw. The Bank of Poland founded another at Dombrowa, which is now the property of French capitalists, having its office in Paris. The prohibitive tariff (1868) led a large number of foreign metallurgists to build great furnaces all along the frontier. The iron and steel output in 1911 was 3,704,000 tons ; this represented the output of 18,000 workers.

The question is often asked : If Poland were free, how could she hope successfully to organize her economic life without support from the markets of the East ? Her industry, it is affirmed, produces for foreign consumption. What would become of the great factories bristling with chimneys, what would become of the legions of workmen, generations of whom have followed the same trade, if a world-wide upheaval rendered Poland independent ? The reply to these fears lies in the great law of adaptation. The desire to live will always surmount these difficulties. Alsace-Lorraine is a case in point. Alsace was an ancient centre of the textile industry. In the fourteenth century linen and wool workers were spread all through Alsace, and

in 1743 the first experiments were made in printing cloth. The great pioneer of cotton was named Koechlin, and in a short time the great Alsatian industry had sprung into existence. The cotton industry embraced almost the whole of Alsace. All buyers of printed calico went to Alsace to make their purchases. From the time when Mulhausen,<sup>1</sup> a free town, was annexed at her own request by France in 1798, there was nothing to impede her industries, which had been cramped until then by the duties levied by France on all manufactured goods. The vast conquests of the Empire opened for her a huge field for commerce. Coloured cloths, spinning, weaving, engineering, chemical products (industries which bear a striking analogy to those of Lodz), made of Mulhausen a great industrial centre. This town became (and remained so until 1870) the industrial capital, not only of Alsace, but of the six departments, the Upper and Lower Rhône, the Vosges, the Doubs, the Upper Saône, and the Meurthe. "Mulhausen," said King Charles X in 1828, "is the capital of French industry."

But disaster came. The annexation of Alsace had the effect of a blow from a club; the country was stunned by it. The reign of terror to which she was subjected gave her a feeling of impotence. Like a man disarmed, she was face to face with an inexorable power. What would be the fate of

<sup>1</sup> R. Levy, "Histoire Economique de l'Industrie cotonnière en Alsace" (1912).

unhappy Alsace, the limb cut from the bleeding body of France? She was one of the most prosperous countries in Europe. What would be the economic consequences of her separation from France and her amalgamation with Germany? She was shut out from the market for which her products were intended. She was forced to turn to Germany, and make a new market there, struggling against other methods of commerce, and in the face of enmity. What was the outcome of this period? The manufacturers were faced by many problems. Ruin seemed to be before them. But the men of eminence did not give up hope. They made numberless attempts, and at last succeeded in gaining approval at the peace preliminaries for the export of goods into France on a graduated scale. A description of this method is found in the "Souvenirs" of Monsieur Dollfus, a great manufacturer of Alsace. He was the salvation of Alsace, by gaining permission to export into France about £14,000,000 of merchandise; this was towards the end of 1872, so that industry had had one and a half years to adapt itself to the new order of things. This it accomplished by taking the bull by the horns. Behind was a glorious past: industrial traditions, a unique staff, and work-people of the first class. Victory was the outcome of perseverance. Into her factories were introduced all the improvements that had been invented during forty years of sorrow. This example of Alsatian perseverance is a good augury, perhaps for the

friends of Polish industry. She can accommodate herself to all conditions. She will never give way to despair. In the first place the market nearest to hand will be restocked, that is, the Polish market, which is so much the firmer. The treaties of Vienna, of 1815, drawn up by the participating Powers—between Russia and Austria, Russia and Prussia, Prussia and Austria—still considered that as far as tariffs were concerned the whole country inhabited by Poles was one territory. Navigation on all the rivers and canals of Poland was to be free for all the inhabitants. The Powers declared (Art. 28) that all the products of the Polish provinces, considered as such before the first partition, might be exchanged free of duty. This included the land between the Dwina, the Dnieper, the Dniester, the Oder, and the sea, together with Western Prussia.

Soon the dust of time covered the leaves of the treaties, and when in the Prussian Chamber Deputy Niegolewski, in 1861 (22nd April), implored the Government to uphold the stipulations of the Congress of Vienna, he was greeted by the smiles of his colleagues and indescribable amazement on the part of the ministers. The Treaty of Vienna was regarded then as a “scrap of paper.” The same fate was reserved for the Polish claims in 1879, during the discussion of the question of tariffs. The Poles asked the German Government to take into consideration, at the time of the conclusion of the commercial treaties with Russia and Austria,

the rights guaranteed to Poland by the Treaty of Vienna relating to the political and commercial unity of all the Polish provinces included within her territories before 1772. The imperturbable serenity with which Bismarck brushed aside these claims can be imagined.

A home market supplying 20,000,000 inhabitants, who up to that time had bought from other markets, German or Austrian, would prove a compensation for the "Paradise Lost" in the markets of the East. This market was, however, far from being a Paradise, and for one simple reason, the competition with so-called Muscovite productions. A desperate struggle raged between these two centres, and every order possible was obtained to the detriment of Polish commerce. As early as 1826, the merchants of Moscow complained of Polish competition, and recrimination became continuous from the time of the introduction of the protectionist regime.

During the year 1886, a commission, presided over by the celebrated Russian economist Professor Janchulle (Janzul), declared, in drawing a comparison between Poland and Russia, that in Poland fuel is cheaper, capital firmer, and the rate for lending money lower than in Russia, and lastly the relations between capital and labour were on a better footing than in the Empire. In Russia wages were lower, the markets dearer, and the expenses for works of public utility more reduced. The observations of Professor Janchulle have been

endorsed many times since, both by foreign and Polish economists. How then does Lodz come to outdistance Moscow? A German professor, G. von Schultze-Gävernitz of Freiburg, laid stress on the qualities of the Polish workmen. He approaches nearer than his Russian comrade to the type created by the great industries of the West. He is altogether more European. He eats better and works better; he is more prudent, better instructed in his trade, more highly specialized. He does not require such a close watch kept over him; he is anxious to win respect. Corporal punishment at Lodz is unknown, and fines are rare. According to Janchulle, certain Moscow manufacturers had profited largely by their system of fines. At Moscow a day's work consists of from fourteen to sixteen hours, an average day being twelve and a half hours. At Lodz it never exceeds eleven hours, and yet work is cheaper there. At Lodz, also, the workman benefits by different social organizations, which Janchulle recommended to the manufacturers of Moscow. Whereas these organizations exist in every Polish factory, out of 158 in Moscow only 10 possess them. These remarks, however, it must be remembered, were made thirty years ago.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Maxime Kovalevsky, "La Russie Sociale" (Conférences faites au Collège de France, Jan. 1914), says: "The intense nature of the labour agitation which took place during the last years of the last century, and the first years of this, forced the Government to inquire into the conditions of the town workers. A law had been passed creating a factory inspector, and forbidding women and children to work full time. The

What were these organizations? A pharmacy, a restaurant, schools, a co-operative society in premises given by the manufacturer, dwellings for the employees, a home for the aged and infirm, a savings bank, and a superannuation fund—all of these were to be found.

In the struggle between Lodz and Moscow, the manufacturers of Moscow had a very great advantage. The cost of transport for merchandise sent to the Eastern markets was much more costly from Lodz, namely an increase of 45 per cent: on goods sent to Wladikawkaz, and 180 per cent. on those to Koursk, while a freight of cotton, in its raw state, sent from the shores of the Caspian reached Moscow for 12d., and Lodz for 17d. per 36 lb. (pood). Yet in spite of all these disabilities, Lodz remained

working day was declared to be limited to 11½ hours; and in 1906 to 10 hours; the actual hours of work were not to exceed 9 hours. But this law, as Professor Ozerow showed in his "*La Politique Ouvrière en Russie*" (Moscow, 1905), has remained a dead letter. At the same time the Government issued orders to the inspectors of factories to do all in their power to avert strikes. Nevertheless, if this was impossible they were to make the workers understand that no concession might be made to them, on the part of their employers, until they had resumed work. Where the directors agreed to the demands of the workers, they ran the risk of incurring grave penalties by order of the State. Workers who would not listen to reason were deported to their native towns. It was not until 1912 that the Government laid down that it was the duty of employers to look after the workers in cases of sickness and accidents. Not until then was a law passed enforcing the insurance of workmen against sickness and accidents.

victorious. Workmen of a superior class were an enormous asset in such a struggle, and Professor Janchulle in his report has shown this to be the case. Lodz, generally speaking, is better supplied with capital than Moscow. Every invention, be it English, French, or American, is immediately adopted. English, Alsatian, and German engineers have been there with their brains, and Lodz has benefited thereby. The town is situated in the country of the Napoleonic Code, and is in the enjoyment of the mortgage system, which has existed in Poland for three hundred years, but which is not found in Russia to this day.

Ten years after Professor Janchulle, a Frenchman had occasion to investigate the economic struggle between Lodz and Moscow. A French consul, M. Verstraete, said in his voluminous report on the exhibition at Nijni-Novgorod: "The Moscovite centre, the sanctuary of national industry, always following the traditions and the footsteps of the past, is the incarnation of the ancient spirit, and this is personified in her manufacturers, the majority of whom are Russians of the old stock. Many of them still wear the boots, caftan, and cap, cross themselves with two fingers, and have luxurious abodes where they keep to their old customs. Other customs come from Poland. Poland was represented at the exhibition, not so much by tools and stock in trade, as by a great richness of inspiration, a real superiority in manufacture, a style so modern that it must show home

manufacturers the desirability of altering their productions, of bringing them up to date, and making them to please the taste of their well-to-do customers. Polish industry is beginning to raise a more formidable barrier against foreign imports than the tariffs themselves. She is beginning to manufacture Parisian productions. She represents the new spirit. The district round Moscow is jealous of Poland. A little before 1897, the manufacturers of Moscow addressed a petition to the Government asking them to prohibit the importation of Polish wool stuffs into Russia, except on the payment of a tariff. "This," says the French Consul in conclusion, "betrayed the state of mind, and the antipathy of the Moscovite centre to any competition emanating from the West."<sup>1</sup>

To learn what Poland has been in the past, and what she is in the present, it is only necessary to study with more precision her most important river, the Vistula. The history of the Vistula sheds light upon the ancient condition of Poland, and on her condition to-day. The basin of the Vistula is like the throbbing heart of the country, and the story of the rôle she has played in the evolution of the country is to a certain extent emblematic of Poland's historic destinies. Her past, like that of the Vistula, is more brilliant than her present. Through a line of marshes extending towards the west, where the Bydgoszcz (Bromberg) canal has been constructed, the river formerly pointed a way

<sup>1</sup> M. Verstraete, "La Russie Industrielle" (1897), pp. 155-7.

towards the Oder by the Noteć. To the east the Narew joined up the Bug and the Dnieper. Her extensive domain in this way formed the ancient Kingdom of Poland. The Vistula then was the main national artery of Poland. Her importance as a means of communication is testified to by the ruined granaries at Kazimierz, the imposing walls of which have resisted the tempests which swept over the country from time to time, and the still more ancient ruins of Włocławek, which antedate them by two hundred years. The commercial value of the river declined with the fall of Poland; the partition of the country meant that of the river. As far as Zawichost and Sandomierz it was Austrian, to Nieszawa Russian, and German to Gdańsk (Danzig). At these places along the frontier were customs houses, which contributed, together with the creation of new means of communication, to decrease German traffic to a great extent. To bring it back again would have meant the expending of both time and money, which was never available for such a use. Plans had been on foot to connect the Vistula to the Dniester by means of a canal, a distance of not more than 40 miles. This question was raised in Poland as early as the sixteenth century. These 40 miles would have established a line of communication of 730 miles. The construction of this canal involved work on the San, the Vistula, and on the Dniester in the borders of Galicia, and Austria never had the money to undertake such an important enter-

prise. Prussia alone had the money. The Vistula occupies an area of 60,200 square miles, 16,600 of which are in Silesia and Galicia, 41,300 in the Kingdom of Poland, the Provinces of Volhynia and Grodno, and 11,900 in West and East Prussia. With her 21 tributaries, she has a total length of 4,800 miles, nearly 3,100 of which are navigable. But the employment of the river as a means of transport is not practicable yet; no canals have been cut, nor anything done to improve it for navigation, except on a very short portion of the Prussian section. Prussia alone has spent £3,600,000 in carrying out the necessary works. In Galicia fifty years have only brought about the making of canals a few miles in length. In the Kingdom of Poland nothing has been done except in the vicinity of Warsaw. One of the most fatal consequences of this neglect is the huge havoc caused in Galicia and in Poland by the annual floods; another is the rudimentary state of navigation. Steam-boats on the Vistula only number 135, 75 belonging to Prussia, 55 to Poland, and 5 to Galicia. As mentioned above, the political redistribution allotted only a minor share to Prussia compared with that enjoyed by the other participants, in fact, one-fifth of the area of the basin. But it was the best part, for it comprised the mouth of the river. Prussia looked after her share, but the others made nothing of theirs. "And the Vistula was condemned to the humiliating rôle of general uselessness. She also," as the Dean of

Nancy, M. Bertrand Auerbach,<sup>1</sup> declared, "is a victim of the partition of Poland."

At the estuary is the town called Gdansk (Gedanum), in German Danzig, a beautiful old city, the Venice of the North, with a history full of the wonders of the past. On a wall of the Town Hall is inscribed "Exsuperans Gedanum"; it is a town famous in the twelfth century for her commerce, under Teutonic rule from 1308 to 1454, reunited to Poland from the fifteenth century up to 1793, and from 1807 to 1813 occupied by Napoleon. Since then it has been incorporated in the State of Prussia. Danzig is also a city full of pride; on one occasion, rather than acknowledge the King, Stephan Batory, it endured a siege of several months; on another it withstood Prussian domination for twenty years, although blockaded on the continent and menaced by the foundation of other commercial centres. The merchant vessels of Danzig visited Portugal in the sixteenth century, and voyaged as far as Brazil in search of sugar. The Dutch found Danzig agreeable; they set up factories and mills; they introduced new methods of breeding cattle, and the ceramic treasures of Delft. A distillery for liqueurs was established by the Dutch in 1598, and is still in existence; the founder was called Ambrose Vermollen, and was the inventor of Danzig brandy, which has always been held in high esteem in Poland.

<sup>1</sup> "Annales de Géographie," xii. 234.

Towards the end of the sixteenth century Italians made their appearance in the markets of Danzig. Duke Vicenzo Gonzaga of Mantua did business there, and the Pope bought corn there at a time of dearth. A whole fleet of boats full of Polish corn was sent to Rome, where Pope Gregory XIV greeted them as though they were salvation sent by Heaven.

To-day Danzig is a flourishing town. The Vistula brings to her the riches of many mines, Russian salt, Polish wood, Lithuanian corn. The Vistula is not looked after as a waterway, but the force of circumstance is too strong. Where there are several means of communication it is well known that the heavier commodities, such as coal, iron, and salt, are always transported, where possible, by water. At Nieszawa, on the Prussian frontier, a few years ago, 1,840 boats were counted carrying commodities to the value of £500,000. Venerable oaks from the forests of Lithuania, Podolia, Volhynia, and Russia, pines and birches were carried to Danzig, from Danzig to Kiel, Hamburg, Havre, and Bordeaux. Besides steam-boats, rafts pass to and fro. Although these have fallen into disuse on the rivers of the West, they are still highly esteemed in Poland, where a simple, sympathetic people, the raftsmen and bargees, spend their life on the water. Of these 2,000 rafts, 200 come from Galicia, 850 from Poland, 700 from Podolia; in this way all Poland is as one on the frontier under the same grey-blue skies, and on

the majestic waves of the Vistula all the provinces of Poland carry the products of her soil to the sea.

But Gdansk is a German town! Only for the time being, perhaps! The Czech capital, the magnificent town of Prague—Zlata Praha—was also absolutely German scarcely fifty years ago. The great Russian Slavist Pypin tells us in his “Memoirs” that when he visited Prague in 1859 he was stupefied at finding himself in a German town, where it was a matter of searching to find a Czech speaking his own language. “Only German is heard in the streets; all the flags are German, the inhabitants are scarcely of the Slav type.” At a restaurant he addressed a waiter: “Are you Czech?” “Heaven preserve me,” he replied. And Pypin concluded: “An ordinary tourist going to Prague for several days would leave the town with the conviction that he had visited a beautiful German city, where there were some Czechs.”

A German born at Prague, the celebrated musician Edward Hanslick, notes in his “Memoirs,” published twenty years later, his astonishment at seeing Prague ceasing to be a German town and becoming Czech. This metamorphosis is not too difficult to understand. The upper classes in Bohemia were germanized, and also the town, but the people remained Czech. And it is the people who have brought about this miracle, who have reconquered their capital which their fathers abandoned to the victors of the “White Mountain.”

Statistics are the most eloquent witnesses. In 1848 the population numbered 120,000, more than half of whom were German. In 1900, out of 394,000 inhabitants only 24,000 were German. The entire Municipal Council is Czech. "Prague has torn aside the German envelope in which she was wrapped."

In the same way the people of Danzig are not Germans. If you talk to the fishermen on the quay-side, to the women of the people, or with the peasants who come into the town on market days, it is clear that they are not German. But what are they then?

By the shores of the sea which ought to be called, and which will be called one day, the Polish Sea, in Kachoubian Switzerland, in the midst of the plains marked with sand-dunes among smiling lakes, there dwells a people numbering some hundreds of thousands, a joyous, healthy people: the Kachoubes. Polish grammarians do not agree on the subject of their language. Some consider it as a Polish dialect, others as having its origin in the Slav tongue, a third, the younger school (and these are perhaps right), see in it the remains of an ancient language, "Lechite," which has been extinct since the commencement of the eighteenth century. The actual language of the Kachoubes is a compromise between this ancient tongue and the Polish language. The upper classes of the Kachoubes have been germanized for some centuries; they have yielded to the attraction of Prussian culture. On the other hand, the German

colonies established some centuries ago with Teutonic thoroughness have tended to become Polish in their characteristics. One influence strove with the other, and the colonists were in the ascendant. The Polish Republic was so tolerant that she addressed messages to them in German.<sup>1</sup>

To-day all these colonists have become Kachoubes. The Polish element has disappeared from castle and town, but the peasants have remained Poles. All the learned classes arising from the people, the young doctors, lawyers, and priests, are Kachoubes, and have retained the civilization of Poland. Following Dr. Maykowski, their intellectual leader, the younger generation consider Poland as their fatherland. This is the reason why Gdansk will one day become a Polish town. In days to come the Vistula, once more the river of Poland, will see the mounting waves of the Kachoubian sea submerge the present town, and, following the example of Prague, Gdansk will become a Polish port.

The chroniclers of the town of Danzig record that in the year 1392, 300 English, Dutch, and

<sup>1</sup> M. Welschinger, in the *Revue Hebdomadaire*, 1907, iv. 5, quoted a German Socialist paper appearing in Alsace, the *Volksfreund*: "For two hundred years we have belonged to France, and that country has never thought it necessary to steal our language from us, or to impose the French tongue on us by force. During the whole time France made no endeavours to conquer the country, only to win it over. King Charles X, when travelling in Alsace in 1828, apologized to the principal personages for speaking French."

French vessels entered the port, and in 1490, 790. In the fourteenth century there were bonds uniting the commerce of Western Europe and Poland.

Sundered by the partition of Poland, these ties will be knit up anew. It is a necessity for such a country to have an outlet to the sea. The Vistula is such a natural outlet. This great river, the mainspring of the country's economic life, will open up vast horizons; it will bring the Latin races into close communication with the shores of Poland.

The central idea emerging from all these facts is this: that there is a natural necessity for the unity of Poland, of Poland's personality. The eminent French Slavist, M. Paul Boyer, has spoken of the individuality of the Polish language.<sup>1</sup> Submerged by the Germanic wave on the west, and by the Russian and Byzantine waves on the east, it has nevertheless guarded its individuality intact. Centuries have passed, centuries of grandeur, a century and a half of misery, of abandonment, and finally a century of attempts on the part of the oppressors to cut down the national tree of Poland. The trunk has been rent into three. Yet the time for its reuniting is coming. A consideration of the material facts of the life of the Polish provinces, united in their mineral wealth, in their economic structure, and by the great artery of the Vistula, forces one to believe in the possibility of so simple an idea as that of a free and independent existence.

<sup>1</sup> In a lecture given at the "Ecole des Hautes Etudes Sociales" (1915-16).

Surely the prophetic words that Strabo applied to France may apply here: "This land is one and undividable, not by chance, but by the action of some great far-seeing mind."

### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- KELTIES. The Statesman's Year Book (1915).
- KRZYZANOWSKI, A., & KUMANIECKI, K. Statistical Tables of the Kingdom of Poland. Cracow, 1915 (in Polish).
- ZALESKI. Comparative Statistics of the Kingdom of Poland, 1876, 1901, 1913 (in Polish).
- Statistical Annual of the Kingdom of Poland. Warsaw, 1914 (in Polish).
- VIDAL DE LA BLACHE. Tableau de la Géographie de la France. Paris, 1903, p. 7 ff.
- Polish Geographical Dictionary, Vol. VIII, p. 601 ff.; article "Poland," by the eminent geographer, W. Nalkowski (in Polish).
- BUJAK. Galicia, 2 vols. Cracow, 1908-10 (in Polish).
- CASPART. Miscellaneous articles in the Polish economic review *Ekonomista*, 1908-12. Warsaw.
- DASZYNsKA-GOLINSKA. Economic Independence of Poland. Warsaw, 1915 (in Polish).
- SZCZEPANSKI, A. State of the Industrial Production of Galicia in 1910. Lwow, 1912 (in Polish); the same in the *Revue Politique et Parlementaire*, Vol. LXXX, pp. 509-22 (1914).
- WOYCICKI. Les Classes ouvrières dans le Royaume de Pologne. Louvain, 1909.
- ZUKOWSKI. Commercial Balance of the Kingdom of Poland. Warsaw, 1901-04 (in Polish).
- BIELSCHOWSKY, F. Textilindustrie des Lodzer Rayons (in Professor Schmoller's *Staats und Sozialwissenschaftliche Forschungen*, Band 160). Leipsic, 1912.
- VON SCHULTZE-GÄVERNITZ. Volkswirtschaftliche Studien aus Russland. Leipsic, 1899.
- YANSCHUL. Report on Exploration of Industry in the Kingdom of Poland (in Russian). Petrograd, 1888; the same in the Russian review *Vyestnik Jevropy*. Petrograd, 1890.
- HOBSON, J. A. The Evolution of Modern Capitalism. London, 1898.
- KOSZUTSKI, ST. The Great Industry in the Kingdom of Poland (in Polish). Warsaw, 1901.
- WITTSCHEVSKY, V. Russlands Handels- Zoll- und Industrie-Politik. Berlin, 1905.
- VERSTRAETE, M. La Russie Industrielle, étude sur l'Exposition de Nijni-Novgorod. Paris, 1897.
- Die wirtschaftliche Lage Galiziens. (Six lectures by Professors Bujak, Buzek, Stefczyk, Twardowski, and Zaranski.) Leipsic, 1913.
- RYMAR. Oil Industry of Galicia (in Polish). Cracow, 1914.
- ZARANSKI. On the Oil Industry (in Vienna Parliamentary Reports for the year 1910, No. 903).
- PIECHOWSKI. Vistula as a Commercial Road (in the Polish economic review *Ekonomista*, 1905).
- KELLER, H. Memel- Pregel- und Weichselstrom, Vol. III, p. 248 ff. Berlin, 1899.
- AUERBACH in the *Annales de Géographie*, Vol. XIII, p. 234 ff. Paris.
- ROMER. Vistula (in the Polish review *Kosmos*, 1902, pp. 61-120).
- SAWICKI, L. Hydrography of Poland (in the great Polish Encyclopedia published by the Polish Academy of Cracow, 1913, p. 266 ff.).
- PAWINSKI, A. E. Batory and Gdansk (in Polish). Warsaw, 1877.
- ROPELL. Geschichte Polens, Vol. I, p. 8 ff. 1840.

# **AN OUTLINE OF THE HISTORY OF POLISH LITERATURE**

BY

**JAN de HOLEWINSKI**

With a Preface by

**G. P. GOOCH**



## PREFACE

*It is better for a nation to lose its body than its soul. If the soul dies, it cannot be restored; but if it endures, a new body will be created for it in the fullness of time.* The Polish State ceased to exist over a century ago. Yet her bitterest enemy would not dare to contend that Poland is dead. Her sons are compelled by a cruel fate to slay each other in the armies of Germany, Austria, and Russia; but they never forget that they are brothers. They cling tenaciously to the hope that the colossal crime of Partition will be undone, and they are resolved that their nation, which played an honourable part in building up the civilization of Christendom, shall once again raise its head and be numbered among the States of Europe. They know that even after a total eclipse the sun shines forth again as brightly as ever.

Since 1795 the soul of Poland has been kept alive and nourished by its literature, its language, and its religion. This little book explains with admirable clearness and brevity the part which literature has played in the life of the race. For many centuries Poland was one of the largest countries in Europe, and she has never cut herself off from the movements which make up its intellectual history. Cracow

University was founded in 1400, and the fifteenth century brought with it the invigorating influence of humanism. The first blossoming period of Polish letters was the century of the Reformation, when Kochanowski, the contemporary and friend of Ronsard, presented his countrymen with their first poetical masterpieces. The sterility of the seventeenth century is attributed by our author to the paralysing influences of Jesuitism; but the closing years of the Polish State witnessed a marked revival of taste and production, due to French classicism and owing much to the fostering care of Stanislas Poniatowski, the last King of Poland.

The best evidence of the vitality and virility of the Polish nation is that its finest literary achievements are subsequent to the period when its body was torn asunder. The greatest name in Polish literature is that of Mickiewicz, the leader of the romantic movement, who found a welcome and a chair in Paris when he was exiled from his native Lithuania. His most famous work, "Pan Tadeusz," has appeared in English dress, and his national ballads are sung by Poles throughout the Old World and the New. Long after his death his remains were brought to the Cathedral of Cracow, the resting-place of Kosciuszko and many another hero.

Next to 1795 the year 1863 is the saddest date in Polish history; for in that year the few privileges which Russian Poland had retained were swept away. Our author tells us that it closed the romantic age of literature and ushered in a period of positivism and utilitarianism. But as the luminous star of

Mickiewicz rose in the generation that followed the Partition, so the robust personality of Sienkiewicz brought comfort and stimulus in the dark years which followed the great revolt. "Quo Vadis," that picture of the glory and shame of Imperial Rome, is known all over the world, for it has been translated into more than thirty languages; but for Poles the significance of their great compatriot lies above all in his Polish historical novels, "Fire and Sword" and its successors, the famous trilogy which makes the seventeenth century, with its fierce passions and desperate struggles, live again.

England has always felt a sympathetic interest in the Polish race, though she has never been able to render it much assistance. But to-day our fortunes are more closely united. From the welter of blood and tears we look for the emergence of a new Polish State, purified and strengthened in the fires of adversity. If our dream is realized, a new chapter will speedily be added to the History of Polish Literature.

G. P. GOOCH.



## AN OUTLINE OF THE HISTORY OF POLISH LITERATURE

The outward signs of the life of nations do not consist alone in the national institutions pertaining to political independence, therefore the nation which has ceased to be politically must not entertain a doubt of its existence: verily, if a nation has developed its spiritual powers and its national genius to the highest measure, and if its spiritual achievements contain the elements of and contribute to the universal culture and civilization, that nation can always say with hope and pride: "I create, so I am."<sup>1</sup>

### I

FOR the first few centuries after Poland asserted herself, in 964, as an organized State, the low level of culture and the rule of the sword, necessitated by the constant warfare on the eastern frontier and the bitter struggle against the German predatory instincts in the west, created an atmosphere in which literary propensities met with little encouragement. The spiritual nourishment of the people was myth and legend, born of old; some

<sup>1</sup> Paraphrased quotation from A. Swietochowski: "Political Indications" (1883).

of these, of great beauty, have come down the ages and still live among us.

It is only in the twelfth century that we meet with more extensive works than manuscripts consisting of a few leaves. The Polish language had no existence in the writings of these times ; the chronicles of Gall (Gallus) and of Kadlubek, called Magister Vincent, dating from the second half of the twelfth century, were written in Latin, the language brought in the tenth century to Poland by the priests. In Latin also were written all the liturgic books and official documents.

About the year 1400 the nobility began to rebel against the predominance of the caste of priests, who, being the only educated element, used all their influence to direct the destinies of the country. The current of humanism, which about that time began to filter into Poland, broadened the minds of the nobility, and helped them to understand the power of knowledge as a weapon in their struggle against the priesthood. Humanism came to them before it reached Germany, which country in the fifteenth century was intellectually much inferior to Poland. The nobles began to strive for education, and great was their enthusiasm for the Greco-Roman culture. The 22nd of July, 1400, is the date of the inauguration of the University of Cracow, then the capital of Poland. This University had four faculties : medicine, law, philosophy and theology—this last, the oldest, existing since 1367, gave the tone to the University. Among

the most eminent representatives of Polish humanism are Celtes, Kallimach, and Gregory of Sanok, all of whom lived in the beginning of the fifteenth century. One of the best writers of this epoch was Erasmus Ciolek, called in Latin Vittelus, or Vitelinus, Canon of Cracow and Bishop of Plock, born 1460; a diplomatist, scientist, patron of the arts, and King Alexander's secretary, he was often sent on political missions to Italy, where he was well received at the Court of Julius II, the patron of Michael Angelo. To Ciolek, in a measure, may be ascribed the influence which Italian culture now began to exercise upon Polish poetry; leonines, Latin rhymed verses obtained an equal right of citizenship with the usual hexameters and distichs. Latin was still the only literary language. Jan Dlugosz, born 1415, the first Polish historian, as compared with others, who were merely chroniclers, wrote his history in Latin. Only the Rector of the Cracow University, Jakób Parkosz of Zórawica, who died in 1455, left a Latin treatise in which he tried to formulate a method of writing the Polish language.

The fifteenth century produced in Poland not only great writers but also great scientists. The coming of Mikolaj Kopernik (Nicolaus Copernicus), the greatest astronomer and mathematician of the age, revolutionized science. The first Polish printed works belong to the same century, as witness the *Paternoster*, *Ave Maria*, and *Credo* to be found in the 1475 Synodial Statutes of Konrad, Bishop of

Wroclaw. Lay prose now came to the fore, and, although the imagination of these times did not make for refinement, it must be remembered that England, even in the sixteenth century, was not shocked by Shakespeare's gross humour.

## II

THE Reformation, instead of provoking long and bloody disturbances, like the Hussite wars in the neighbouring Bohemia, only widened the horizon of the Polish mind. Its coming coincides with the renaissance of thought in Poland, known as the "Golden Age" of Polish art and literature. This name is more befitting to another—later—period, although the epoch which lasted from 1500 to 1632 is worthy of admiration, not only for its political splendour, but for the spontaneity of the development of its literature, the only one in the history of the world which sprang into being, perfect and in full armour, like Minerva from the head of Jupiter.

Protestantism was too deep a philosophy for the masses to understand. A portion of the Polish nobility, who embraced Protestantism and rejected the morality of the Catholic Church for themselves, still needed it for the commoners to keep them in check ; besides, they could not afford to allow the privileges of their caste to become subject to the principle of free investigation preached by Protestantism. The Catholic reaction came soon,

and the great Protestant writers of the epoch too quickly dropped into oblivion, to be rediscovered and appreciated according to their great merits in a much later time.

Such was the fate of Mikolaj Rej of Naglowice, an eminent writer and wholesome philosopher (1505-69). The true picture of the manners and customs of his time, with all their defects and beauties, together with the strikingly plastic silhouettes of his contemporaries, seasoned with an inimitable humour, have come down to us in his works. His incomparable "Zwierzyniec," a collection of humorous anecdotes, reflected a fashion of the time which fostered two styles of writing—the satire and the idyll; his "Warwas," his dialogues of "The Cat with the Lion," his "Complaint of the Republic" hold a prominent place in Polish literature, but his masterpieces are the poem "Postyla" and "Zywot Czlowieka Poczciwego" ("The Life of an Honest Man"). His language in richness and flexibility is equal to that of Orzechowski and Skarga.

The greatest figure of this age, however, was Jan Kochanowski (1530-84), the contemporary and friend of Ronsard. His early poems were all in Latin, but he soon abandoned this tongue for Polish, over which he obtained great mastery. He was a true son of the Renaissance, a pagan theist, indifferent to the Church, imbued with republican ideas, broad- and liberal-minded. His works up to the present are considered as a model of highly

cultured language, which, though magnificent in "Fraszki" ("Trifles"), only reached its zenith in the elegies, "Treny," he wrote upon the death of his beloved daughter Ursula.

History also had its representative in the person of Marcin Bielski, famous for his chronicles.

The Catholic reaction, from among the clergy and aristocracy, brought to light oratorical geniuses, who condemned the disintegration of morals and preached the return to the bosom of the Church. The year 1543 was the turning-point in the need of the Polish population for literature. The works of the preacher Orzechowski (1515-66) were in enormous demand. A still more celebrated orator was a Jesuit, Peter Skarga (1536-1612); the extreme strength and purity of his language render him comparable to the greatest orators of the world, and in one of the fiery forecasts he unrolled before the Diet (his third sermon) he foretold the partition of Poland, which took place two hundred years later.

After this Jesuitism seized upon Poland, and held her in its grip till the middle of the eighteenth century. The influence of the Jesuits was enormous; they ruled the minds, the schools were in their hands, and they lowered the intellectual level so that the literary field became almost sterile, except, perhaps, for the traditional eloquence; even this became infected with ecclesiastical Latin, and resulted in a macaronic medley, without value either as Latin or as Polish.

The most commendable literary production of these times is "Recollections, 1658-1659," by Chrysostom Pasek, a good soldier, who wrote the history of his Danish expedition. He died in 1700, but his memoirs were found and published only in 1836.

### III

THE depressing influence of Jesuitism in Poland lasted till the same classicism, which in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries as humanism and renaissance regenerated the literature of all nations, reappeared again, somewhat modified, as French classicism, in the shape of a fully developed, ready-made system of ideas. In Poland the influence of the new current made itself felt as far back as the reign of the Saxon dynasty (August III). It found the ground prepared for its reception by the connections between the Polish and French Courts, but it was the ascent to the throne of King Stanislaw August Poniatowski (1764)—himself brought up in France—that definitely paved the way for this classicism, which had two stages of development, and may be divided into two periods: the period of the reign of King Stanislaw (1764-95) and the after-partition period (1795-1815). In the first period the special care which the King bestowed upon poetry favoured the development of this art. Famous were the King's Thursday Dinners in the small palace of Lazienki, at which the painters of the day were welcome guests and poets had the

opportunity of reading their verses. This even gave some of the works the character of Court poetry ; but French classicism was then a new current full of force and vitality, it uplifted new banners, it spread new movement and new life, and begat legions of clever and even eminent writers.

Of undeniable literary value are the lyrics and epics, odes, idylls and satires of the King's favourite Naruszewicz, the songs of F. Karpinski, the erotics and fables of F. Kniaznin, the reformatory efforts of Konarski, the writings of the Jesuit Albertrandi, of the priests Bohomolec, Staszyc, and the famous Kollataj ; but the best exponent of all the tendencies of the epoch was I. Krasicki, Bishop of Warmia, who succeeded Naruszewicz in the favour of the King. He was born on February 3, 1745, in the castle of Dubiecko in Ruthenia. His first "Chats" appeared in 1765 in the Warsaw *Monitor*, edited by Bohomolec, but his talent only reached its apogee between 1773 and 1780 ; his humorous epos "Myszeidos Songs X," his "Monachomachia," his serious heroic epic poem "Wojna Chocimska" ("War of Chotim"), his "Pan Podstoli," his satires, fables and parables won him homage on his arrival in Warsaw in 1782. He it was who led French classicism to its highest degree of development and ennobled it with his talent. It is interesting to note that this classical writer's translations of the "Song of Ossian" and Percy's popular ballads were the precursors of the future developments of Polish literature.

The revolutionary hurricane that swept over France at the end of the eighteenth century, and provoked the shattering and violent change of religious creeds there, had its repercussion in the Polish atmosphere, but cleansed it only and brought to it new ideas. The younger generation especially was in constant communication with the best minds of France, seeking advice and moral guidance. Rousseau gave this often, and his influence makes itself felt even in the writings of Staszyc, though the latter clamours for the consolidation of the governmental power, shaken by the institutions of the noble-republican régime and the *Liberum Veto*. Voltaire had his followers: Trembecki, Krasicki's contemporary and perhaps his equal in talent, though of inferior moral value, and his spiritual brother in Voltaire, Kajetan Wegierski, the less talented of the two.

Sad was then the fate of the theatre, for scenic art was homeless in Poland. An advantageous change came in 1779, when, by the King's order, began the erection of a special building in Warsaw. In 1781 the management of this theatre was placed in the hands of the actors, whence it passed in 1783 to Prince Marcin Lubomirski, who, after a few months, was succeeded by W. Boguslawski, whose merit in putting this institution on a proper footing won for him the name of the "Father of the Polish Theatre." In 1814 Boguslawski ceded the directorship to his son-in-law Ludwik Osinski, retired to his country seat, and died in 1829.

The most popular playwright of this epoch was Zablocki, a writer of comedy and satire; his "Zabobonnik" ("A Man of Superstition"), "Fircyk w Zalotach" ("The Fop's Courtship"), "Zółta Szlafmyca" ("The Yellow Nightcap"), "Malzonkowie pojednani przez swoje Zony" ("Husbands Reconciled by their Wives"), in part bear traces of German influence and in part are modelled on Molière; they still appear, from time to time, on the stage, as does also the comedy with songs, "Krakowiacy i Górale" ("Cracovians and Mountaineers") of Boguslawski, who was a better theatre-manager than a playwright.

F. Xav. Dmochowski was one of the last writers having all the characteristics of the first period. Apart from his own works, he is known by his translations of Young's "Night" and Milton's "Paradise Lost."

Julian Ursyn Niemcewicz, born in Lithuania in 1758, author of "Historical Songs," by the whole weight of his literary activity belongs rather to the second after-partition period of the reign of classicism, although he was already known as a poet and playwright in the time of Stanisław August. He introduced into poetry the neglected historical tragedy, which was later much in favour with the writers of the Duchy of Warsaw epoch.

The last Partition of Poland in 1795 had for result a complete change in the political and social life of the country, but did not effect any radical change in the literature, except, perhaps, for the

depression caused by the religious reaction following on the bankruptcy of the extreme tendencies of rationalism, and for the tinge given to it by the same national patriotic ideas which impregnated the leaning towards social reforms. Classicism continued its reign as the universally accepted principle, but lost its vitality ; its defects became painfully apparent ; the striving after refinement of form which rendered verses gem-like, thanks to the too-uncritical application of Boileau's formula ("Vingt fois sur le métier remettez votre ouvrage, polissez le sans cesse et le repolissez, ajoutez quelquefois et souvent effacez"), led to mechanical versification and conventionality, resulting in the lack of sincerity and the loss of individuality. In his essay on critics and reviewers the immortal Mickiewicz gives an excellent account of this epoch : "The verses of the classics," he says, "by reason of the extraordinary similitude of the flow of the verse, of the style, almost of the rhyme, seem to be wrought from the same metal, to come from the same mint."

Thus French classicism neared the end of its days. Extraordinarily sterile poets laboriously carved their rhymes ; they toiled over worthless poems for whole decades. Kajetan Kozmian wrote his "Ziemianstwo" ("Landed Nobility") for twenty years ; Wezyk translated the "Æneid" for thirteen years ; and Ludwik Osinski, who made good verses and translations of Corneille, lost eleven years over his poem "Okolice Krakowa" ("Environs of Cracow").

This epoch also produced a species of poetry which for its character should not be overlooked. The failure of Kosciuszko's insurrection was followed by the emigration of great numbers of the proscribed, and the afflux of volunteers enabled General Dabrowski, with the authorization of the French Government, to create Polish Legions in Lombardy with the object of combating Austria, and the further aim of reconquering the independence of Poland. The patriotic enthusiasm gave birth to a spontaneous "Poetry of Legions." The chief representative of this kind of patriotic poetry was a legionary, Cyprian Godebski. It was on Italian soil that Wybicki composed, in 1797, the "Mazurek of Dabrowski," set to music by Prince Michal Oginski—the famous "Jeszcze Polska nie zginela . . ." ("Poland is not yet Lost")—which was the beloved song of the Legions, and in 1831 was raised to the dignity of, and has since remained, the Polish National Anthem.

In the time of the Duchy of Warsaw steadily went on the process of the undermining of classicism by new elements, which bore the seeds of future change. The imminent reaction had its forerunners in poets like Wincenty Reklewski and Tymon Zaborowski, still classical, but imbued already with the new propensities, which began to permeate the European, and especially the German, literature. The most talented of these forerunners was undoubtedly Andrzej Brodzinski, who played the same rôle towards the Polish intellectual revo-

lution as Herder towards the German. He was born in Galicia in 1791; he took part in Napoleon's Russian campaign, and about 1820 settled in Warsaw, where his lectures at the University on Polish literature, Shakespeare, Goethe, Schiller, and others, were greatly appreciated. His *chef d'œuvre* is "Wieslaw," an idyllic poem in which traces of Goethe's "Herman and Dorothea" can be detected.

#### IV

TRANSFORMATIONS in literature are due to the influence of great and powerful mental currents, which are not confined to one nation alone, but embrace the larger part of the civilized countries.

The new tendencies percolated into Poland from Germany, which country was already under the English influence. It is true that German literature in the last quarter of the eighteenth century had followed new paths—it was not yet romanticism, but a movement that contained many of its elements. After the theories of French classicism had been repudiated, new æsthetic and literary principles were created, which required that the imitation of famous authors should be abandoned, and that the substance and the form should be drawn from life and reality, and be bound up with the national spirit. This path was followed by Herder, Buerger, Lessing, Schiller, and Goethe, all men of the epoch of the highest flight of German poetry.

In France romanticism was accepted much later, although the classic Rousseau introduced into the literature a fresh element opposed to the dry rationalism, namely, sentimentalism. Chateaubriand, classic too, adopted the fantastic, and showed symptoms of rebellion against Voltairianism. The lyric poet Lamartine's activity has the same tinge, but the first decisive break with the old tradition dates only from the coming of Victor Hugo, who in 1822 and 1824 threw down the gauntlet to classicism.

In England at a much earlier date had been published collections of popular poetry; the "Song of Ossian" ("Remains of Ancient Poetry," collected in the Highlands of Scotland, and translated from the Gaelic or Erse language. 1760); in 1762 appeared "Fingal," in 1763 "Temora," and a collection of old English and Scotch songs and ballads ("Reliques of Ancient English Poetry"), published by Thomas Percy in 1765. These works opened up the heretofore unknown worlds of popular imagination, and of the chivalrous glory of knighthood, and carried with them another element of regeneration—fantasy. They made a deep impression not only in Germany but in the whole of Western Europe. Then, after Robert Burns (1786) and the Lake Poets, began a distinct drifting towards romanticism. The watchword was—truth and simplicity. Then appeared Wordsworth and Coleridge; but the true romanticism came only with Sir Walter Scott. Thomas Moore followed in

his footsteps, and the lyrical Percy Bysshe Shelley added to the laurels of English poetry ; but the pillar of the romantic edifice, and the main representative of the new poetry was George Noel Gordon, Lord Byron, a poet of genius, endowed with a marvellous power of fantasy and feeling, a passionate and stormy temperament, independent and full of noble impulses. It is scarcely necessary to insist upon his extraordinary influence on the literature of the world.

Literary epochs throughout all ages are connected like the links of a chain and represent an unbroken whole. In Poland the eighteenth century, by raising the educational level and the æsthetic standards lowered in the seventeenth century, and cleansing the polluted language, gradually prepared the way for the nineteenth century, which alone merits the name of "The Golden Age of Polish Literature"—the age which, by the far-reaching radiation of its influence, by the noble character of its ideas, by the supreme value of its creations, banishes all former epochs to the shadow, and shines with such effulgence that it need fear no eclipse from the suns that blaze in other literary firmaments.

In Poland the romantic epoch lasted almost fifty years, and may be divided into three periods : the stage of its initial evolution commencing in 1815 and ending with the outbreak of the November revolution in 1830 ; its highest flight between that date and 1848 ; its decline down to 1863.

If one wished to give the fundamental characteristic of this new literary tendency, one would have to say that the source from which it sprang was the unusually powerful development of individualism as a factor in the cultural evolution of civilized humanity ; the individual apprehends his rights, breaks his fetters, and begins to display his power in all fields of mental, social, and political life ; in literature individualism gives scope for independence in creation ; the works of the epoch bear the stamp of idealism, sentimentality, and fantasy sometimes carried to exaltation ; poetry has absorbed not only the folk-lore and mediæval legends, but everywhere has acquired a nationalist bias.

This happened especially in Poland, where the national misfortune, so strongly felt by the whole nation, was bound to find its expression in the poetry. Romanticism here did not provoke the isolation of souls as in Germany, nor did it render them wildly independent as in England ; on the contrary, it drew them closer together in an exalted feeling of compatriotism. Polish romantic literature would have a much greater universal significance were it not for the European ignorance of the language in which it is written ; yet the direct influence of the great Polish masters may be exemplified in the power of Mickiewicz over the minds of Pushkin and Lamennais ; the latter copied Mickiewicz's "Book of Pilgrimage" in his "Word of a Believer." Before the national ballads in-

spired the greatest poet of Poland, the way was prepared for him by the three immediate followers of Brodzinski—by Malczewski, Zaleski, and Goszczyński; these form what is called to-day the Ukrainian group.

Antoni Malczewski was born in Wolyn in 1793, and died when only thirty-three, unknown and unrecognized. He was the son of a Polish general, and, as the fashion then was, received the French culture of his sphere. In his travels he encountered Byron in Venice. Both belonged to the same social rank, both were melancholy and sensual, and soon became friends. There Malczewski gave Byron the idea for his poem "Mazeppa." Malczewski's reputation rests on one poem, "Marja, an Ukrainian Tale," now one of the most celebrated in Polish literature. It recalls in style Byron's early epics, though it is considerably deeper in sentiment.

Bogdan Zaleski, born in 1802, is the next of the same group. He sang the beauty of his beloved steppes of the Dnieperland, and, somewhat mildly and elegiacally, the dangerous life and solitary death of the Kozak (Cossack). One of his best-known poems, however, is "The Holy Family," a slightly bloodless Christian idyll. After the collapse of the revolution in 1831 he emigrated to Paris, and, with the great Polish masters Mickiewicz and Slowacki, fell under the influence of Towianski, a Polish mystic philosopher, who exercised an extraordinary power over much greater minds than his own.

The third of this group, Severyn Goszczynski, was born in the neighbourhood of Kief in 1801. He was endowed with great dramatic talent; his poems, in which love takes only a secondary place, sound like a battle-trumpet or the howling of the tempest. His principal poem is the "Castle of Kaniow," and treats of a sanguinary peasant revolt at the end of the eighteenth century.

Above all other poets of the epoch stand, like giant oaks amid saplings, Mickiewicz, Slowacki, and Krasinski, the Polish national prophets. Of the three Adam Mickiewicz exerted the greatest influence upon the masses. He was born on December 24, 1798, near the town of Nowogrodek, at Zaosie, a village inhabited by a small-holding nobility—a frequent phenomenon in Lithuania. While still a child he, of course, came much in contact with the villagers, who stored his mind with tales and legends, which, as his ballads show, were not stifled by his education at the Dominican monastery in Wilno, where he was sent in 1808. A particular feature of these monastic schools was a tendency to develop subtlety of feeling as much as the mental powers of the pupils. Mickiewicz studied at the Wilno University from 1815 to 1819. He was a member of both the student societies, Philaretans and Philomatians, the latter consisting of only twelve members selected from the best minds among the students. "Country, Science, and Virtue" was the watchword of these societies.

While still at the University he published his

first works in the *Tygodnik Wilenski* in 1818, and already the *unguis leonis* reveals itself in these youthful attempts. In 1820 and 1821 he wrote all the ballads in which we find the reflection of the tales he listened to in childhood: "Lilje" ("Lilies"), "Ucieczka" ("The Fugue"), "Tukaj," "Switezianka" ("Lady of the Switez Lake"), and "Romantycznosc" ("Romanticism"), noteworthy for its expression of the tendency of the epoch, declaring a preference for the poet's clairvoyance as against the dry investigating mind of the scientist. Then he wrote the "Song of the Philaretans," "Ode to Youth," several short poems, and the fourth part of his "Dziady," the first poem of betrayed love occurring in Polish literature. After this came an innovation in the shape of "Grazyna," a romance in verse.

Then the poet was confronted by the grim realities of life. Against the Society of Philaretans (founded in 1820 by Tomasz Zan) proceedings were taken in 1823 by the senator Nicholas Novosiltzev. Although these societies only aimed at the intellectual and moral development of the students, they could not escape the persecuting fury of the Russian authorities; they were dissolved, and Mickiewicz, together with the other members, was imprisoned and exiled to Russia. He quitted for ever Wilno and his beloved Lithuania on October 24, 1824. After a stay in Odessa he went to Moscow, and there wrote his "Crimean Sonnets," notable for their marvellous force of expression and their novel

style, scintillating with all the colours of the East. They were published in 1826. Although written in Polish, these sonnets made a great impression in Moscow. Poets began to gather round Mickiewicz. At the house of N. Polevoi, editor of the *Moscow Telegrams*, he met Pushkin, and a friendship sprang up between the two young men. His growing fame opened to him the house of Princess Zeneida Volkonskaia. To his Russian confrères gathered there he read fragments of "Konrad Wallenrod," published in Moscow in 1828, the poem in which the sentiment of patriotism finds its best expression. It is superior to "Grazyna" chiefly owing to the greater profundity of sentiment, the beauty, and picturesqueness of description, and the ravishing versification. In 1828 he moved to St. Petersburg. There he wrote two of his best ballads, already free from any agency of the supernatural, "Trzech Budrysów" ("The Three Budrys") and "Czaty" ("Ambuscade"), and one of his masterpieces, the poem "Farys."

In 1829 he received a passport for Europe. Through Berlin and Dresden he arrived at Weimar, where he made the acquaintance of the octogenarian Goethe, the Belgian savant Quetelet, and the famous French sculptor David d'Angers. Thence he journeyed to Rome, which he left in 1831 for Paris, where he came in contact with the colony of Polish exiles driven thither by the collapse of the November revolution. Paris depressed him greatly, and nostalgia overwhelmed him. He made a desperate

effort to return to her country, but permission was refused him by the Russian Government. 1831 finds him in Dresden, where the third part of "Dziady" was finished. This third part, which in logical sequence ought to follow the fourth, is remarkable for its lofty ideas and its graphic representation of detail. In the same year he returns to Paris. Here, from his gifted pen, flow the "Books of the Nation" and the "Books of the Polish Pilgrimage," from which the quotation, "Inasmuch as you broaden and improve your souls, so much do you improve your rights and widen your frontiers," the best explains its leading idea. Haunted by the memories of his country and his longing for it, in 1833 he writes the best poem known in the annals of literature, the famous "Pan Tadeusz," which he himself calls the "Poem of the Nobility," the most powerful epopoeia of the age, a genre picture of the life of the Lithuanian country nobility, in which the love and passionate yearning for his country breathes in every line and in every syllable. European literature knows no other poetical work equal to this; it is unrivalled as an account of the beauties of the Polish land which "he saw and described, for he longed for it."

In 1839 the Chair of Latin Literatures at the Lausanne University was offered to him. It was in this period that George Sand, through an essay published in the *Revue des deux Mondes*, comparing him to Byron and Goethe, made him known to the

world. In 1840, after much pressing, he accepted the Chair of Slavonic Literatures at the Paris Sorbonne, where in his lectures he proved to be the possessor of a wonderful gift of improvisation. His sharp criticism of the unjust French governmental policy was rewarded by the offer of a long leave of absence from his post, and his resignation followed in 1844, but in 1852, in view of his great merits and his contributions to the store of French knowledge, he was offered the directorship of the Arsenal Library. In 1855 he went to Constantinople with the idea of forming Polish Legions to redeem his country from servitude. He succeeded, but his hopes were destroyed by the illness which ended in his death on November 26, 1855. His embalmed body was transported on January 21, 1856, to the cemetery of Montmorency, near Paris, and on July 4, 1890, to Cracow, where with royal honours, it was laid to rest in the Royal Crypt of Wawel Cathedral, close to Kosciuszko's tomb. The nation paid this tribute to its greatest poet.

There is no other poetic genius of such luxuriant, luminous, ethereally light fantasy, and yet so deeply and charmingly melancholy withal, as Juliusz Slowacki, no other who disposes of a wider range of sentiment. He is the poet of great hearts, capable not only of feeling deeply but of analysing their feelings ; in this respect he is nearer our own times than is Mickiewicz. His imagination is volatile as thought, flexible, darting, rich as Nature herself ;

This is the poetry of deep thought and brilliant form.

He was born on August 23, 1809, at Krzemieniec, in Wolyn. He came of a cultured family, his father being a poet, and later, in 1811, professor of poetry and oratory at the University of Wilno, where Slowacki was admitted to the public school, through which he passed in six years, having always been a remarkably good pupil. In 1825 he entered the faculty of law at the Wilno University. After having finished his studies he went in 1829 to Warsaw, where he wrote and published his first poem, "Hugo," in which his untried wings are still fettered by classicism. Soon, however, he shook himself free, and his "Kulig," written shortly afterwards, already shows unmistakable traces of his imaginative genius.

The outbreak of the Revolution of 1830 was to him, as to many, a surprise. He left Warsaw in March 1831 for Dresden, where a mission was confided to him together with a letter to General Grouchy, who was then in London. Slowacki liked England, where he greatly enjoyed his short stay, but September 9th found him already in Paris. There he published two small volumes of poetry, which were received with an indifference painful to the young poet. Publishing the third volume in 1833, he wrote in the preface: "Neither encouraged by praise, nor killed as yet by criticism, I throw this third volume into the gulf of silence which has swallowed the other two." Recognition came to

him later. His Byronism at this time was extreme. All six of his romances in verse, "Hugo," "Arab," "Mnich," "Jan Bielecki," "Zmija," "Lambro," and both his dramas, "Mindowe" and "Marja Stuart," have in common the same, sometimes insufficiently justified, violence of feeling and intentional complication of action.

In 1834 in Geneva he wrote and published anonymously "Kordjan," a drama, the hero of which is the embodiment of the Polish national spirit. This was the work in which his genius fully revealed itself. Fragments of "Kordjan" can bear comparison with the best passages from the works of Shakespeare and Schiller. In the same period he wrote his drama, "Balladyna," which is slightly akin to "King Lear," but the combination of divers elements of tragedy which, with a characteristic contempt of rules, he succeeds in harmonizing, confers upon it the stamp of originality. About the same time he wrote the tragedy "Horsztynski," of which only a few fragments have reached us. Some innocent love entanglements drove him to Veytoux, and there, in 1835, he composed the superb lyrics, "Rozlaczenie" ("Parting"), "Przeklenstwo" ("The Malediction"), "Stokrotki" ("Daisies"), and "The Last Adieu to Laure."

A journey to Egypt and Palestine contributed not a little to the enrichment of his imagination, and resulted in his writing "The Voyage to the Holy Land," the "Hymn at Sunset on the Sea,"

"To Teofil Januszewski," "Letter to Alexander H.," "Pyramids," and "The Father of the Plague-stricken," a short poem descriptive of the despair of a father imprisoned in quarantine and unable to save the lives of his children, who die one by one. This is perhaps the best poem of the series from a structural point of view. In 1837 he returned to Florence, bringing with him one of his most original works, the prose poem "Anhelli," written in the calm of the Betheshban Monastery at the foot of Mount Lebanon. In this poem he leads us among the exiles in Siberia, and shows us their sufferings and his visions of the restoration of Poland. One does not know which to admire the most, his unbounded imagination or his prose, to which, disdaining the use of *páthos*, he gives the impressiveness and voluminousness of flowing music. In Florence, surrounded by souvenirs of Dante, he wrote two poems, "Piast Dantyszek, Herbu Leliwa" and "Waclaw," neither of which belong to his best works, in contrast to his next poem, "In Switzerland," which is one of his *chef d'œuvres*.

He spent the remainder of his days in Paris, where he returned in December 1838. From 1839 to 1841 he wrote two groups of works, with distinct traces of Byronism in the first, and with the criticism of Byronism resounding loudly in the second. To the first group belong the dramas "Lilla Weneda" and "Mazepa," and a tragedy "Beatrix Cenci"; to the second his incomparable "Voyage to the Holy Land," "Incorrígibles," and

"Beniowski." In the latter poem, in spite of his abjuration of Byronism, Byron was his leader. In this, the ripest of his masterpieces, sound faint echoes of "Don Juan," just as much as of Ariosto's "Orlando Furioso." His heroes are merely a pretext, a peg on which to hang the digressions which are continually either making incursions into the realm of his personal emotions or fulminating against the critics, or sending sword-thrusts into the domain of religion, society, and politics, and are ever ranging from frivolity and gaiety, tenderness and melancholy, to irony, satire, and biting sarcasm. Although his uncontrollable genius sometimes overthrows the propriety of form, it is done in such brilliant fashion, and in such vibrant language, that one waits with impatience for the thrilling pleasure of a recurrent occasion. Later he published the mystic dramas "Ksiadz Marek" ("Priest Marek"), 1843; "Sen Srebrny Salomei" ("The Silver Dream of Salomea"), 1844; and "Król Duch" ("King Spirit"), unfortunately left unfinished. The basic idea of this last poem is the transmigration of the soul, which, through indescribable sufferings, triumphs over evil and reaches perfection. Slowacki died in Paris on April 4, 1848. His body was transported to the church St. Philippe du Roule and buried at the cemetery of Montmartre, where it still remains.

Although Count Zygmunt Krasinski was not the creator of the Polish philosophic-political poetry—in this he had been forestalled by the prematurely

deceased Stefan Garczynski—he it was who brought it to the highest pitch of perfection. He voiced noble and lofty principles, strove for the harmonious co-operation of all social classes, stirred universal problems, made extensive philosophical generalizations, and so linked Polish poetry to the poetry of other civilized nations.

No one of the great Polish poets developed in such early youth as Krasinski. He was born in Paris, in an aristocratic sphere, on February 19, 1812. Baroness de la Haye superintended his upbringing, and her grateful nursling, at the age of six years, wrote for her stories under the title of "*La Bonne Fée Marie*." When only fifteen years of age he wrote a fair-sized historical novel, naturally full of heartrending tragedies, entitled "*The Tomb of the Family of Reichstal*," published in 1828. A certain routine can be discerned in his next historical novel, "*Wladyslaw Herman and his Court*." This was published in 1830, when he was already abroad. He visited Switzerland and Italy, and from this period dates the short fragment "*Exile*," which he wrote, together with a number of other works, all unfortunately lost except "*Agaj Han*" (published in 1834), an historical novel, the heroine of which was the Tsaritsa Maryna after the assassination of the false Dmitry. In this youthful novel, where the outline of the principal characters is not yet sufficiently firm, he makes a tentative effort to impress by a pathetic and sonorous language.

The democratic movement of these times (Louis Philippe) in France directed his mind towards more general problems and towards poetry, "which gathers eternity and the infinite under its wings." He found himself confronted with the problem: what is to be the result of the war declared by the French Revolution on the ideals of the past? In 1833, at the age of twenty-one, he wrote his "Godless Comedy," a fantastic drama. He intended it to be "the defence of what is attacked by the rabble: religion and the glory of the past"; but inspiration carried the poet away—it did not permit him to become an upholder of the interests of one class, but gave him a deep insight into the social and political movement in its entirety. The impressive close of this dramatic poem cries that not the fratricidal struggle, but love alone, will lead humanity to true liberty and happiness.

The winter of 1834 Krasinski spent in Rome, where he wrote his second fantastic drama "Irydion," which, although placed in an imaginary epoch, testifies to the poet's profound eruditeness in the matter of Roman customs of the third century. From 1836 he published nothing till 1841, then appeared the short prose poem "Temptation" and "A Summer Night"; these were followed by "Three Thoughts remaining after the late Henryk Ligeza," "Legend," "The Son of Darkness," "The Dream of Cesara," a small treatise "The Trinity and the Incarnation," and another "On the Eternal

Life." In 1845 he published "The Psalms of the Future" (Faith, Hope, and Love), in which he is rather a publicist than a poet, and several short lyric poems.

He died in Paris on February 23, 1859.

Sprinkled among the great stars of the literary firmament were many minor poets, often friends and followers of the illustrious masters. Ballads were in favour with A. E. Odyniec (1804-84) and Al. Chodzko (1804-91). Julian Korsak (died 1855), although a worshipper of the great poets, did not succumb to the prevailing balladomania. The secret of the widespread popularity of some of these minor poets was that they so well formulated the views and catered for the sentimental needs of the epoch. The best known are Konstanty Gaszynski and Wincenty Pol, a man of real talent.

Of course the critics waged a bitter war against the new romantic tendencies. The most talented of them, Maurycy Mochnacki (1804-34), in his essay on the Polish literature of the nineteenth century, was unable to reconcile his German æsthetic rules with the all-invading romanticism, which, however, conquered him later. F. S. Dmochowski's rage drove him to write a good deal of nonsense on the subject, and only a wide knowledge of European literature led the incisive critic, F. Morawski, to stand by the new ideas.

The field of philosophy yielded a rich harvest.

Józef Kremer was the first to acquaint Poland with Hegel's system. More independent than the former was F. B. Trentowski, whose writings made a deep impression on Mickiewicz. A characteristic sign of the times was that Karol Libelt desired to base his philosophical system on the popular creeds, and to construct a philosophy of imagination, unlike his contemporary, Count August Cieszkowski, who endeavoured to create a philosophy of will; but the most gigantic mentality among the Polish philosophers of the period was that of Józef Hoene-Wronski (1778-1853). There was no field of science that this marvellous mind did not make its own.

The fertile soil of this epoch also produced novels in the modern sense of the word, as, for instance, "Unwise Vows" by Felix Bernatowicz. The historical novel had its representative in Count Fryderyk Skarbek, Professor of Political Economy at the Warsaw University. The theatre was supplied with drama by Józef Korzeniowski and with comedy by Count Alexander Fredro, a man of hearty jovial laughter, whose works have not escaped the romantic contagion.

Romanticism is immortal; it has outlived forms of art and schools of art. The succeeding epoch of positivism could do no more than cover it with a layer of ashes, and we inevitably return to it in the present day; but none of our present creative spirits is fantastic or mystic: positivism has stamped them with its brand. The new romanti-

cism is a healthy enthusiasm that quickens to ecstasy our feelings for Nature, love, friendship, common memories. In few literatures this abiding romanticism has attained to an expression of such beauty as in the Polish.

## V

IN 1848 the world-wide outburst of national feeling disturbed the atmosphere in Poland. It had not for result any important political change in Europe, nor did it lessen the Polish attachment to romanticism, which, although it sank nearer to earth after the great national poets became silent, still upheld in Polish souls the hope of the speedy restoration of independence. It was only the catastrophic failure of the 1863 insurrection that tore the rosy bandage of illusion from the eyes of the people and showed them the stark reality. This catastrophe did not kill the national spirit, but the rivers of blood shed for the motherland, the absence of her best sons, rotting in prisons or exiled in long, winding processions to Siberia, weakened the nation's physical force. Several years of prostration and much-needed recuperation had to elapse before the country could return to work, under a new watchword, however, lent by Auguste Comte's positivism, which found a ready echo in the wearied minds of the Polish people. Romanticism was pushed on one side by the might of

practical reason ; science became utilitarian and politics sober under the influence of the categorical imperative, "Be positive !" and all became positive, even poetry.

The most prominent representative of this epoch—still living to-day—is Alexander Swietochowski, the champion of reason and the rights of man. He was a good author but a better publicist, and his influence upon the Polish mind was very deep. His generation, however, cannot boast a single genius, a single hero. It was several years before the national pulse quickened and the literature gathered force and once more spread its mighty branches abroad in the face of the sun. Meanwhile the prevailing positivism directed the minds towards scientific research ; historical studies undertaken in Lwów and Cracow gave important results. In the domain of *belles-lettres* about 1880 Józef Ignacy Kraszewski still held undisputed sway. This exceedingly prolific author was not of the race of eagles, but, had he no other merits, we should be indebted to him for the staunching of the flood of cheap French novels and their replacement by his own works, imbued with a warm love of the nation and its history, in which subject he was profoundly versed.

Positivism found its best exponent in the person of Eliza Orzeszko (Orzeszkowa). Her novels are hymns of praise to the ideals of progress, knowledge, duty. She has shown great intuition in grasping the character of the then nascent social-

ism in Poland. Her "Meir Ezofowicz" is the defence of the man in the Jew.

The novelist J. Zacharjasiewicz gave us pseudo-progressive novels confined to a narrow circle of domestic virtues. One of the very few writers of this epoch to fight against Philistine tendencies and resignation to fate was T. T. Jez, who died in 1915, as an exile in Switzerland. Of his numerous works the novels dealing with the Southern Slavs are especially attractive. Among the Galician progressists the most popular was M. Balucki, a faithful henchman of the lower middle-class as of a free and conquering social element. A defender of the ideals of the same class, but with a much greater breadth of understanding, was the satiric and witty Jan Lam.

The "Magnus Parenz" of modern Polish poetry was Adam Asnyk, a man of delicacy of sentiment rather than any robuster qualities. In his younger days he had dreamed a dream of souls who feel their power, but after the collapse of the last Polish insurrection, in which he took part, a deep change came to the poet's mind. He then gave his country in beautiful crystalline musical lyrics the result of his long logical meditations. But it was left to Marja Konopnicka, the greatest of Poland's women-poets, to add a new string to the poet's lyre: the people, in the modern acceptance of the word. To her powerful talent are due many literary achievements of rich and varied form; one of the latest is "Mister Balcer in Brazil," the

people's epopee, as "Pan Tadeusz" of Mickiewicz is the epopee of the nobility. It stands out not only as a literary landmark, but as a frontier post in the culture of the people; it signifies that the nation has risen above the class spirit, and has admitted the people to its Pantheon.

Other poets of this epoch of the disintegration and failure of positivism were W. Gomulicki, a son of rationalism, the first prominent and the most refined representative of what is called "The School of Parnassus"; Cz. Jankowski, an excellent lyric poet and a brother spirit of Baumbach and Heine, without the poison of Heine's sting; A. Urbanski, K. Brzozowski, both singers of heroism and martyrdom, and W. Stebelski, noteworthy only for the fact that in his works sound the first strains of a further stage of development in the evolution of literature—of decadence.

The plays of the epoch do not testify to the existence of any great talent among the playwrights. There was, however, Józef Szuski, historian, author of several important works, whose occupation as a professor of the University did not estrange him from literature, and who wrote historical dramas full of hopeless bitterness. Other theatrical fields were taken possession of by the mediocrity. Musical comedy (operette) and farce had a French flavour, and comedy, deep in the grey realities of life, did not dazzle by the radiance of the authors' talent.

During the chilly era of positivism the mass of

country gentry, stranded on the pavements of the town by the economic crisis due to the policy of the Russian Government, were forced to change their skins, but in the new envelope of an employé or an engineer still dwelt the soul of the nobleman of yesterday, with all its wealth of instincts and traditions; their adoration of the past and love for the national distinctiveness were bound to burst the crust of self-criticism and utilitarianism. The inevitable reaction came, and created the atmosphere necessary to Henryk Sienkiewicz for the full development of his potent individuality. The democratic and progressive was his preferred type in his early novels, but the moment the first protest against positivism became audible, Sienkiewicz turned towards the past and spread its treasures magnificently before the nation. His trilogy, "Ogniem i Mieczem" ("By Fire and Sword"), "Potop" ("The Deluge"), and "Pan Wolodyjowski" are not books, but great deeds. The nation was yearning for a stimulus, was panting for fuller breath, and it received a whirlwind of memories and enthusiastic visions. Although his heroes are average men, not of the race of philosophers, this incomparable artist has made them so extraordinarily plastic that they live to-day among the people as indubitable historical truths. He is a master in the art of stirring the deepest emotions, as may be found by the readers of his short stories and his less voluminous works, but he is too great a plastic artist to be quite fortunate in his search

for ideas in the modern whirlpool of psychological conflicts. The intrinsic value of his novels, "Without Dogma" and "The Family of Polanieckis," is due alone to his immense talent, which made "Without Dogma" a masterpiece of descriptive psychology, though, against his intention, it is rather a tragedy of love than of faith, just as "The Family of Polanieckis" is an attempted synthesis of all the spiritual elements of the epoch, for which he tried to discover a formula. The moment he returned to the domain of history he created two *chefs d'œuvre*, the world-famed "Quo Vadis" and "Cruciferi," both planned on an heroic scale, and studded with gems of untold beauty. "Cruciferi" is a story of love, masterfully embroidered on the background of the historic struggle of Poland against Germanism. It is very characteristic of Sienkiewicz that, having brought the language to the acme of vigour and purity, he uses it as a painter uses the colours of his palette. He acts upon the mind through the eyes; one could almost say that he writes with as potent a brush as that of Matejko, and his strokes are as powerful as those of Michael Angelo's chisel. The Nobel prize and the national gift of a piece of land in token of admiration were but a feeble expression of the universal appreciation of his talent.

From 1883 Warsaw was ruled by his Excellency General Hurko and his wife Maria Andreievna. Jankulio raged then at the head of the Board of Censors, and Apuchtin as the Curator of the Polish

Educational District. Then began the extermination of all that was Polish—the bleeding of Lithuania, the strangling of Podlasie. To heap up the measure, in 1885, Bismarck, in his anti-Polish madness, raised the cry of "*Ausrotten*." This stirred the Polish national spirit to its depths. The country people, on whom the brunt of the persecution fell, became an object of purely social sympathy and care. A movement was started, and in it Jan Kasprowicz found his inspiration, and gave to literature the real peasant, heavy but strong, his broad bosom filled with the love of his land, to which he is bound by every fibre of his being.

This epoch fostered a hardy and warlike generation, straining its force to the greatness of its task, and not choosing the task commensurate with its strength. There is Napierski, the analyst of his reflections; there are the youthfully fiery temperamental poets, Nowicki and Andrzej Niemojewski; there is Adam Szymanski, whose prose "Sketches" have the melancholy of a song of Siberian exiles; there is the optimistic Boleslaw Prus (Alexander Glowacki), a powerful plastic talent, the disciple of positivism, the bonds of which he breaks, however, when it proves too narrow for him, an adept in accurate science and a writer of strong, manly sentiment. His "*Placówka*" ("The Sentinel") and "*Powracajaca Fala*" ("The Returning Wave") are synthesis of feeling; the same synthesis runs through the novels "*Lalka*" ("The Doll") and "*Faraon*" ("Pharaoh"), which

tells of the young ruler's vain efforts to apply his noble ideas of justice to the accepted order of things. In this work, which is translated into all European languages, Prus reaches complete inward harmony.

The eminent painter and writer, Stanislaw Witkiewicz's vigorous study, "Our Art and Criticism," violently polemical in tone, burst open the door for the friends of naturalism, carrying the banners of Stendhal, Balzac, Zola, Daudet, and Maupassant. The ideas of naturalism attracted men of great talent, such as Adolf Dygasinski, in whose novels and stories the lead is taken by Nature, and who proves to possess the brain of a scientist and the heart of a poet. Naturalistic too is Mme. Gabryela Zapolska in her descriptions of the neurosis of great cities. Until the neo-romantic current carried him with it Ant. Sygietynski's objectivism and anatomical methods linked him to the same school, to which belong also the resigned and melancholy Ostoja and Z. Niedzwiedzki, a misanthropic denunciator of the beast in man.

The last echoes of the war against positivism sound, meanwhile, in the novels of T. Jeske-Choinski, A. Krechowiecki, and Marja Rodziewicz, and in the stories of Cecylja Walewska and W. Kosiakiewicz, but the realism of the last-named becomes dull and commonplace.

Naturalism had the merit of imposing upon writers the obligation of absolute sincerity and of a thorough knowledge of the subject treated, but

it was too narrow a doctrine to encompass the heights and depths of the human soul ; it could not last long in its initial stage, and from impersonal objectivism in its evolution passed into impressionistic subjectivism. In this form it was adopted by the most talented masters of the craft.

Sever, in a great variety of themes and ideas, gives a remarkably subtle feeling of the beauty of the Polish countryside.

W. St. Reymont, a powerfully expansive elemental nature, feels the best the characteristic phenomena, and loves the best the unmixed poetry of the elements. The drawing of his intellectual types is not always flawless, but in "*Chlopi*" ("*The Peasants*") his forceful picturing of the souls of the Polish peasants and their patriotism, springing from the love of their land, has something of the grandeur and indomitableness of the elements among which they live. This work has been translated into English, French, and German. The present war stopped the publication of his last creation, "*The Year of 1794*," in which in glowing words he paints the epoch of the last Partition of Poland.

Stefan Zeromski, a gigantic talent, has absorbed the elements both of romantic heroism and of the strong faith of positivism. Throughout his works vibrates the note of pain and bitter suffering of his generation ; for his subtle yet keen feelings evil is the substance of the universe, and Ahriman always triumphant ; for him the instinct of duty

is heroism. It is difficult to imagine a better harmonized compound of lofty ideals, volcanic temperament, and close study of the epoch than is contained in his "Popioly" ("Ashes").

W. Sieroszewski is a man concentrated, crystallized, and strong. His types are inspired with his faith in nature and man, and have the strength and calm of statues. His exile provided him with rich material for those delicately carved gems, his stories from Siberia. His "Flight from Siberia" is translated into English. In his "Beniowski" he emphasizes the power of human genius over the wild forces of the Kamtchatkan nature, and the horrors of its eighteenth-century exile settlements.

While the activity of these impressionist prose-writers was throbbing with life, the need of new ideas, the longing for great art, made itself felt in poetry. It could not be satisfied by the gifted poets then straying through this realm. S. Rossowski, Or-ot (Artur Oppman), the painter of the vanishing world of Napoleonic worshippers, St. Wierzbicki, and K. Glinski, the epigons of romanticism, and the exquisite and refined Adam M...ski, possess pleasant sounding but one-chorded lutes.

At the same time there now strikes as in France for many-stringed poetic souls the hour of decadence; they look for inspiration in every domain of the external world instead of seeking it within their own breasts, and become, like Antoni Lange, virtuosos of form but lacking in

substance. Some writers, like Belmont, Mankowski, and Ig. Dabrowski may be defined as men "without dogma."

Through the melancholy of the exhaustion of the *fin de siècle* the outlines of a new culture become perceptible in the propaganda of the poet Miriam (Zenon Przesmycki), an æsthetic thinker, a mystic monist basing his art on the ideas of Maeterlinck and du Prel; but the most arresting and dolorous expression of the modern longings for unattainable happiness has been found by Kazimierz Tetmajer, the poet of the Tatra Mountains, who has asserted himself as a great talent not only in poetry but also in his Tatra stories, and has, perhaps, reached his full development in his latest novel, "Napoleon's Epopee," in which he throws an entirely new light on the famous Moscow expedition.

In its turn Cracow rears a young generation that throws down the gauntlet to the "ancients." Modernism is their watchword, but the substance of the new tendency, the leading idea, is to express with sincerity the true emotions of the moment. The advance guard in Warsaw of this new movement were W. Lieder, Mme. M. Komornicka, and C. Jellenta. The Cracow group passed from impressionistic to individualistic modernism, and soon the young band grew so numerous, and so strongly felt the need of drawing more closely together, that when, in 1897, Ludwik Szczepanski founded the weekly *Zycie* (*Life*), all the modernists met under

its banner. This weekly—a sort of continuation of Miriam's *Zycie*, which appeared some ten years previously in Warsaw—undertook “the disinfection of the musty literary atmosphere.” All the men of aspirations were to be found there: Miriam, Tetmajer, Kasprowicz, Jellenta, Komornicka, and the still more recent Zulawski, Rydel, Wyrzykowski, Perzynski, St. Pienkowski, Orkan, Mirandolla, and Lada. These were soon joined by Stanislaw Przybyszewski, till then resident in Germany, where he won laurels and wide renown for his writings in German.

The editorship of *Zycie* passed into the hands of Sever, after whom Przybyszewski, the most talented, the most influential, and the strongest representative of young Poland, took the direction of the paper. This keenly intellectual, spiritually minded man gave precedence to the soul over the brain. For the brain things exist in time and in space; for the soul exist only, non-limited by space and time, the ideas of things. It was this soul of things he endeavoured to reach and to sound. The spiritual force of his works has exercised a strong influence on the development of Polish literature. This author has become silent; over his standard Time has passed a softening hand, slightly effacing its colours, but Przybyszewski's influence brought to literature an element of such depth of thought that since his time the Ivory Gate of Poetry is closed to intellectual mediocrities.

The modernist movement in Polish literature coincides with the important internal social changes. The caste of nobility lost its prestige, and the town element, the middle-class,<sup>1</sup> became preponderant, consequently a *genre* that played a certain rôle in literature—the tale of the country nobility, with its broad gesture and its old-style Polish humour—became extinct. The last to cultivate this *genre* were K. Laskowski, S. Kondratowicz, and Abgar Soltan. Artur Gruszecki's talent is above the level of this group, although his world of nobility is too corrupt to be true to reality.

Józef Weyssenhoff lives in an entirely different world—a world well born and well brought up, a world of refined nerves and subtle æsthetic culture. He himself is a nature of extreme refinement, and his tact, incomparable artistic measure, and apparent reserve, mask a heart pulsing strongly with the love of the land and its people. In beautifully chiselled language he stirs a wide range of emotions. His novels, “Sprawa Dolegi” (“Dolega's Case”) and “Pamietniki Podfilip-

<sup>1</sup> The Polish middle-class is still in process of formation. It is true that in Poland of old there was a class of burgesses, but, in spite of their wealth and numbers, their influence was strictly limited by a nobility jealous of its privileges. The constitution of May 3, 1791, gave to the burgesses equal rights with all classes. The later influx of dispossessed country gentry to the towns, bringing with them refinement and culture, gave an intellectual bias to the growing middle-class, so that now the patent to it is given not by wealth or social standing, but by the degree of intellectual development. The name of the middle-class in Polish is “Intelligentsia.”

skiego" ("Podfilipski's Memoirs"), are genuinely fine, but the flower of his talent blossoms fully in one of his latest achievements, "Soból i Panna" ("A Sable and a Maid"), in which, together with the poetic side of sport, he displays his deep admiration of the landscape and his wise comprehension of youthful feelings and the noble impulses in human nature. Through all his works runs a thread of gentle satire, as subtle as the author himself. He might be compared to Anatole France, had the latter Weyssenhoff's depth of feeling.

The influence of Przybyszewski and his band would have been more durable had not their individualism so completely severed art from life, before they became aware of the asthenia resulting from this estrangement. The most gifted of this group of poets, W. Perzynski, complains—

With no young faith into the world I go,  
No suns of hope suffuse my soul with light,  
The years have rolled—so many and so slow,  
Through my dark room at night.

The decadent works of K. Lewandowski, St. Brzozowski, and even the exquisite artificiality of E. Leszczynski bear the same stamp; Jerzy Zulawski alone seeks a new synthesis. About this time Jan Kasprowicz's talent returns to earth, and, like Antæus, from its contact his poetic personality gains in strength.

In the bitter times that followed the instinct of self-preservation drove the Poles again to seek

salvation in the national ideas. The bowing down to foreign gods did not satisfy the poets. An attempt was made by Lucjan Rydel to nationalize the stage by the introduction of the Polish fable, but his high artistic culture was not adequately supported by a creative imagination. Tetmajer on analyzing his soul discovered there the need of "Polish Saints"; Zeromski, Reymont, and Kasprovicz had felt this intuitively, attaching themselves to the landscape, the people, and the sufferings of Poland. Stanislaw Szczepanowski having, in 1897, sacrificed his parliamentary career and come to Cracow to better serve the national cause, gave expression to the national feelings in his work "The Polish Idea and Internationalism." His fiery appeals aroused the romanticism lying dormant at the bottom of everyone's soul. Then came Stanislaw Wyspianski, the man who was a national revelation. He chose the stage as the medium through which Polish neo-romantic poetry should be heard again, and in soul-stirring tones give voice to the deepest national emotions. The national myth was his substance, which, with all the force of his genius, he incarnated in tragedy. The synthesis of the yearning of the Polish nation for might he gave in his "Legion," the antithesis in "Wesele" ("The Marriage Feast"). In all respects he was an exceptional phenomenon. He came from the world of pictorial art, in which his labours were of short duration, but his achievements testified again to the immensity of his talent.

He was an artist to the marrow of his bones, a lover of beauty, a lover of purity, and yet the extent of his talent was such that it enabled him to descend deep into naturalism and from thence rise to the summit of the sublimest symbolism. With the same force he depicts realistic scenes and visions of the world beyond. The works of Wyspianski, conceived in a lightning-flash of inspiration, he chisels and elaborates, constantly testing them with the touchstone of his high critical standard. Death bereaved Polish literature of him all too soon, but his spirit still stands, and will ever stand, like a pillar of fire for the enlightenment and guidance of the nation. He marked an epoch in Polish poetry, and inaugurated the era of neo-romanticism. Under his breath decadence melted away, the soul of the nation became regenerated, and poetry nationalized.

From the seeds of his sowing sprang a host of young worshippers of might: W. Orkan, with his songs of the foothills of Tatra; Danilowski, with his vision of purity, goodness, and salvation; L. Staff, with the Promethean soul; T. Micinski, endowed with an extraordinary and original poetical organization, is more akin to the mystics of Spain or Belgium than to the romanticists of Poland. Eagles are his companions, and if his flight is lower than that of Wyspianski, it is more sustained, more equal.

The great moral influence of the Polish poetry of recent years is due not to its didactics but to

its high artistic value. When we read such master-pieces as "On the King's Lake" of Tetmajer, "By the Sea" of Przybyszewski, "Ahriman Revenges Himself" of Zeromski, "Dies Iræ" of Kasprowicz, "Legion" of Wyspianski, "Oaks of Czarnobyle" of Micinski, we soar to such a height that we lose sight of all that crawls and creeps upon the face of the earth, and we begin to discern how beautiful, reposeful, and stimulative the God of Goodness must have intended Nature and Life to be. But this becomes perceivable only from the height at which our souls begin to vibrate in unison with the symphony of the Universe.

Poland through her literature has demonstrated to the world an inexhaustible amount of vitality. Moreover, her spiritual achievements contribute to the universal culture, and it is only for the universe to avail itself of the treasures displayed before it.



A SKETCH OF THE HISTORY  
of POLISH ART

BY  
**JAN de HOLEWINSKI**



## A SKETCH OF THE HISTORY OF POLISH ART

And only the Master shall praise us,  
And only the Master shall blame,  
And no one shall work for money,  
And no one shall work for Fame.

RUDYARD KIPLING

L'Envoi—"The Seven Seas."

THERE was a time when the preconceived idea that the Polish nation was racially destitute of artistic capabilities had made headway in many minds, so thoroughly and well, that few students of the evolution of European art thought it necessary to give their attention to the art of Poland. Even some Polish historians (Professor Klaczko), otherwise perspicacious æsthetes, having cursorily skimmed through the pages of the artistic past and found it void of Polish Titians, Michael Angelos, da Vincis, and Velasquezs, proclaimed the nation to be artistically sterile. The later brilliant development of art in Poland contradicts this opinion and shows that they assessed the nation's capacities over-hastily, without having taken into consideration the fact that the hoofs of war-steeds bring death to the subtle and exquisite flower of art, which prospers under the careful tending of

the cultivator in the balmy atmosphere of luxury, but refuses to blossom on the trampled battle-field.

The geographical situation of Poland laid her open to every invasion of her plundering neighbours. The lack of natural defences had for result that the country was constantly swept by storms of violence depriving it of any rest, even in the periods between the great catastrophes, which deserve rather the name of cataclysms. Thus in 1240 the bloodthirsty hordes of Mongol savagery, under Baïdar and Peta, leading with them a portion of the Batu horde, rolled over the land like a tidal wave, to be stemmed by the Polish knighthood only under the walls of Lignica in Silesia (re-christened Liegnitz by the Germans). Twenty years later the barbarians returned to change Sandomierz and Cracow into smouldering heaps of rubble. Before the latter town the third invasion, under the Nogai Han, was broken in the reign of Leszek the Black, but the defenceless towns and villages paid a bloody tribute to the invaders, who, faithful to the tradition of Tchingis Han, left behind them only the sky and the earth. Over 21,000 Polish girls were carried off into *yassyr* (slavery), and every man was put to the sword. Of a like character were the Turkish invasions, and the Cossack wars which ended at the battle of Beresteczko in 1651; these were followed by the Swedish invasion (1655-60) of Carolus Gustavus, which, advancing from the north, flooded the country

as far south as Cracow and Lwów; a study of the further history of Poland shows a continual recurrence of similar events even up to the present day.

Compared with these gigantic life-and-death struggles the mediæval inter-republican Lombardian wars seem almost farcical, especially since the profession of arms passed into the hands of the *condottieri*. We may smile at the description of those glorious battles, where a couple of handfuls of hirelings paced and traversed, and battered at each other's plates of steel from dawn till dusk. Their mutual consideration was touching. The battle of Aughiari, immortalized by Michael Angelo and Leonardo da Vinci in the famous Florence cartoons, bereaved the world, according to Machiavelli, of two heroes slain through some misadventure. It is easy to understand that the Master-painters of some Sienna or Florence could quietly and happily give themselves up to their inspiration, while without the city walls the mercenaries so sparingly shed their blood for the honour of their republics.<sup>1</sup>

The terrific hecatombs exacted from Poland by the repeated invasions, which left no stone upon another, each time broke the continuity of her artistic traditions, because not only the works of art themselves but the accumulated experience of the past and the secrets and methods of the craft were again and again irretrievably lost. Each time it

<sup>1</sup> See T. Jaroszynski, "Zaranie Malarstwa Polskiego," 1905.

was necessary to start afresh, under the most unfavourable conditions, in a society whose minds had been shaped in a peculiar way by the stress of circumstances. The country was continually on the *qui-vive*, and the knighthood, trained to an incessant vigilance and a rough camp life, could not indulge in the cultivation of their aesthetic needs. Austerity was considered the principal virtue of the knights, proud of their position as the defenders of their country and of Christendom, and conscious that under the protection of their shields European culture was enabled to grow and develop. They were the foremost of the nation, and required the highest regard and privileges for their caste, looking with a disapproving eye on the growth of the class of burgesses, who, it was feared, might achieve power through the development of industry and commerce. The middle-class was harassed for luxury in dress and domestic appurtenances, and forbidden to wear certain colours, jewels and weapons ; for the commons the possession of pictures was considered as a punishable offence. With these opinions prevailing among the all-powerful caste of nobility it is not to be wondered at that from the burgesses, even at a time when they were safely sheltered within the walls of their towns, sprang no patrons of art, such as the famous Italian *parvenu*, Giovanni dei Medici of the Renaissance. It is true that the artistic disposition of the courts temporarily spread to the magnates, but their needs were catered for by foreign artists,

imported from the West and even from the East; æsthetic tastes, however, had for long been given no opportunity of penetrating to the core of the nation so as to awaken the national creative spirit. But in the Middle Ages, in the time of unwavering faith, Polish art, if it did not occupy a prominent place among the general cultural attainments, presented a homogeneous whole bearing certain characteristics, which raised it to the importance of a distinct school.

The nascent art in Poland was confined within the narrow limits of the professional-religious congregations, to enmesh itself later, when it passed into lay hands, in a tangle of trade-regulations which, in principle, put a restraint upon its further development. In its time, nevertheless, it strongly manifested its vitality, sufficed for the requirements of the epoch, and in the fourteenth, fifteenth, and the first half of the sixteenth centuries produced works which cannot be esteemed lightly from the point of view of the history of art.

## CHAPTER I

THE question as to what popular art was in Poland in the pre-Christian epoch is outside the sphere of artistic history—properly so called. Ethnologists have rightly determined that the art of the people remains immutable throughout the ages, only becoming gradually enriched by some new feature borrowed from the artists—that is to say, from the creators of plastic art. It would be inexpedient, therefore, to consider popular art in the study of the evolutionary progress of the artistic achievements of a nation. History commences only from the moment when art takes the shape of a profession, handing down the wealth of technical knowledge from one generation to another.

Such art did not spring up spontaneously, but was brought to Poland in the tenth century together with Christianity, with which the era of the civilization of this country opens. The level of art was nowhere very high at this time. The iconoclasm of the eighth century had severed it from the classic traditions. Semitic in character, Byzantinism, which was rather Church-craft shackled in regulations forged at Mount Athos, was commonly adopted throughout Europe even until

the commencement of the thirteenth century ; it is surprising how the generation which professed an ascetic contempt for the beauty of the body craved for the debauchery of magnificence in dress in their paintings ; this love of adornment gave scope for applied art ; the craft of the goldsmith took precedence of sculpture, weaving and embroidery of painting. A sufficient number of the *objets d'art* of this period have escaped destruction to testify to the æsthetic needs of the nation. There are still in existence chalices, patins, covers of missals and crosses embellished with enamel, *niello*, or mosaic. From the tenth century comes, among others, the enamelled reliquary belonging to the Cathedral of Kujawy, and from the twelfth century the one kept in the church of Czerwinsk.

The current of Byzantinism flowing through Kiev from the east met in Poland with Romanism brought thither by the monks of the West, probably by the Benedictines installed in 1006 at Sieciechów by King Boleslaw the Great. Although Romanism eventually triumphed, no traces of it are to be found in pictorial art. The Tartar tempest which ravaged the country at the end of the Roman epoch destroyed both the pictures then painted on wooden panels and the mural paintings in the churches ; the degree of the development of pictorial art in Poland is thus rendered even more uncertain than its beginnings in other northern countries, where very scanty relics still remain. France in St. Savin,

near Poitiers, and Germany in Schwartzheimdorf, near Bonn, possess the only two churches in which are preserved paintings dating from the eleventh century. The sole relics of the epoch, which may be of some guidance to the student of Polish art, are the *miniatures* illuminating sacerdotal books. Although a portion of these must have come from the brushes of the foreign clergy domiciled in Poland, they may be considered as proofs of the quality of the artistic culture of contemporary craftsmen. In the ornamentation of writings Celtic motifs preponderated, thanks to the spread throughout the Continent of Irish manuscripts, which reached as far as Leodium and Wuertzburg, and from there passed to Poland, where they served as models.

Stone structure was, in the country of forests, a new feature also introduced by the immigrant monks, Cistercians and Benedictines; the latter began in the eleventh century the erection of the cathedral in the Wawel Castle in Cracow. The architects of later generations rebuilt it in the fourteenth century in the Gothic style, so that of the original Roman edifice, there remain only a few fragments of walls and the crypt. Of the other Roman churches built in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the cathedrals of Plock, of Kruszwica in the Grand Duchy of Posen, and of Leczyca, and the walls and towers of the Church of St. André in Cracow partly retain their original style, as do five or six smaller churches scattered

throughout the country. In a few of these still remain sculptures of this epoch, interesting in their barbarous endeavour to repeat the Western forms. The marvellous bronze gates of the cathedral at Gniezno (German Gnesen), dating from the same period, are undoubtedly of German workmanship.

## CHAPTER II

POLAND owes her speedy regeneration after the Tartar debacle, partially at least, to the influx of immigrants, especially those of German origin, seeking their fortunes in a depopulated country. There were moments when the vast privileges with which the settlers had been endowed since 1257 might have brought disaster upon Poland, as the new-comers threatened to denationalize the country. The Polish element, however, eventually proved itself to possess enough vital force to assimilate these strangers, and this is why, to-day, foreign-sounding names are to be met with even among Polish patriots.

The Gothic style issued from the Roman as far back as 1160 in France, where it maintained a specific character. With the colonists it drifted into Poland in the thirteenth century from Germany in the form it had acquired in that country. The different structural principles of this style involved the reshaping of all other plastic arts. Frescoes were no longer used to cover the great stretches of side-walls, as these became superseded by lofty pillars interspaced with large windows, to which the decoration of the building migrated and filled them with stained glass ; pictorial art proper transferred

itself to the easel, to tempera and to canvas-covered panels. From the illuminations alone, which extended themselves to the illustration of lay works, it is evident that the imaginative powers of the contemporary artists must have increased considerably.

The influence of the famous Tcheque-Praha school, founded in 1348, made itself felt in Polish painting in the first half of the fifteenth century; later came the influence of the Cologne school, but the 1467 painting of the triptych of the Holy Trinity in the chapel of the Holy Cross in Wawel Cathedral shows traces of the Nuernberg influence. In spite of these influences the majority of the pictures of the Gothic and Renaissance epochs bear the national stamp, not only in the type of faces but also in the landscape; this is instanced by the painting in which the Tatra mountains form a background to the Madonna of the Church of St. Nicholas in Cracow, and permits the inference that Polish art-guilds, although they have not bequeathed to us the names of the painters—in fact, we are obliged to seek these from indirect sources—were numerically and spiritually strong enough to maintain the national character. The Wroclaw guild, according to Alvin Schultz, between 1345 and 1523 produced 150 masters. To the artistic development of the Cracow and Poznan guilds, apart from many Church pictures, witnesses a well-conceived and executed painting of an artist's studio, included in the "*Codex Picturatus Balthasaris Bemii, anno 1505, Continens*

*Privilegia et Plebiscita Urbis Cracoviæ.”* The custom of these corporations was to send their best apprentices for two years’ study abroad, whence they returned laden with rich spoil of technical knowledge. In the Lwów school alone Eastern currents mingled with those of the West, but met with little encouragement from the Court. It is true that King Jagiello, brought up in the traditions of the East, commissioned Russian painters about 1393 to adorn the chapel, called Jagiellon, in Wawel Castle. A very fine specimen of their polychromy was rescued, in a good state of preservation, from under a layer of plaster in 1905. Russian painters, too, decorated the mausoleum of Casimir Jagiellon, in 1471, but the remains of Eastern art are scarce, as the Polish school was guided by Western tendencies.

In architecture the Gothic style bore the imprint of the national individuality; the building material, most often brick, contributed to the creation of variety in the original style, hence Polish Gothic is called synonymously the Vistula-Baltic style and Brick Gothic. Among the churches that withstood the crushing blows of the great historical calamities are the Franciscan and St. Mary’s in Cracow, the cathedrals of Gniezno and Włocławek, and several others simple in decoration but remarkable for the beauty and purity of their silhouettes.

Many sculptures, some of them prodigies of art, have outlasted this age and are still to be found in the Gniezno and Cracow churches. They consist chiefly of tombstones, sarcophagi, and figures of

saints in stone, bronze, or wood ; these last, especially, Poland owes to her own masters, among others to Wit Stwosz (1435-1533), a sculptor and engraver of European fame, who after prolonged studies in Nuernberg returned to live and work in the land of his forefathers. Besides his great masterpieces —the triptych and the splendid figure of Christ in St. Mary's Church in Cracow—there are several minor products of his chisel scattered throughout this town and the German and Bohemian churches. His great value to art is confirmed by the eagerness with which the Germans have endeavoured to confer their nationality upon him. They have shown their appreciation, not only of Wit Stwosz but also of the great Polish astronomer Kopernik, by appropriating them both in the same way as a certain German savant, by means of scientific anthropological apparatus, has appropriated for Germany the Italian creative spirits—Giotto, Dante, Ghiberti, Vinci, Raphael, Titian, Tasso, and Buonarotti, discovering their real names to have been—Jotte, Aigler, Wiebert, Wincke, Sandt, Wetzel, Dasse, and Bohnrodt.<sup>1</sup> Recent close investigations have established that Wit Stwosz was a Pole ; even R. Muther in his “Geschichte der Malerei” says that the paintings in St. Wolfgang's Church, dating from the dawn of German art, are to-day considered by Franz Heege to be the work of the *Polish* master Wit Stwosz.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Woltmann's “Die Germanen und die Renaissance in Italien,” 1905.

<sup>2</sup> *Christliche Kunstblaetter*, No. 11, 1915 : “Arbeit des Weit Stoss am Altare von St. Wolfgang.”

### CHAPTER III

THE regeneration of painting in Italy found no echo in Poland. Cracow, teeming with the Italian architects and sculptors summoned by King Sigismund I, still awaited for a long time the coming of Italian painters. The Court painter, Hans Duerer (born 1478), brother and pupil of the famous Albrecht but himself of secondary talent, did not contribute much to the development of Polish art. A better artist than he, who arrived in Poland in 1514 and left behind him a great number of works, was Jan Suess of Kulmbach. To the art-guilds remained faithful only the lower classes and the poorer clergy, who by the imposition of their naïve didactic tendencies precipitated the downfall of pictorial art. The decline of painting was a phenomenon so much the more remarkable as it occurred simultaneously with the impetuous development of science and literature.

Renaissance architecture made Wawel its first home in Poland. The Gothic castle was destroyed by fire in 1499, and rebuilt as Renaissance in the first quarter of the sixteenth century; the purest product of this style, the northern "pearl of the Renaissance," is the chapel of King Sigismund

the Old, which, like other structural achievements of the epoch, was the work of "Itali," such as Francesco della Lore, Berrecci, Nicolo da Castiglione, Giovanni Cini, Antonio da Fiesole, and other Italian architects and sculptors. The royal example inspired many of the magnates, and patrician residences of the epoch frequently display the decorative motifs of the Renaissance.

The majority of the monuments in the churches of Cracow and Warsaw belong to the seventeenth century, though among these are many, indubitably of Italian workmanship, dating from the sixteenth century.

## CHAPTER IV.

THE art-guilds descend altogether to the level of trade at the end of the sixteenth century. Painting becomes the occupation of a few independent artists, some of them indigenous, and some foreigners acclimatized in Poland. At the Court of King Sigismund August (1548-72) works Coraglo, an engraver of great artistic temperament. At Gdansk (German Dantzig), under the influence of Marcin Kober, portrait painting develops. The Polish nation, however, showed a greater appreciation of art only after the coming of Thomas Dolabella, the pupil of the famous Antonio Vassillachi, called Aliense. He was invited from Venice by King Sigismund III, and being a painter of great facility of execution, left numerous pictures and a host of imitators; he became naturalized in Poland as a citizen of Cracow, where he lived fifty years and where, on his death in 1650, he was buried in the Dominican church. Among his pupils, Wawrzyniec Cieszynski (died 1650) and Marcin Blechowski (died 1761) deserve mention, and among his imitators Zacharyasz Zwonowski and Lukasz Porebowicz. Another Court painter of Sigismund III was Jakób Troszel (born

1538), son of the famous Nuernburg clock-maker ; he, too, spent all his life in Poland, and died in Cracow in 1624.

The influence of Rubens, who painted the portraits of Sigismund III and Wladyslaw IV, was extended by his pupil, Peter Soutmans, and also by the Westermans' popular engravings after the master's pictures. This influence makes itself felt even in the religious paintings of Abbé Franciszek Lexycki ; the great Flemish painter also inspired Bartlomiej Strobel, a native of Wroclaw, retained by King Wladyslaw IV about 1642. The Court painter of King Jan III Sobieski was Jerzy Eleuter, an artist of great breadth of talent, who for many years was considered a foreigner ; he was a Pole, however, a nobleman who had better reasons for concealing his real name, Siemiginowski, than the fear of "staining his escutcheon with trade." In this time the prejudice against art had considerably weakened and did not restrain the passion for painting felt by Pawel Grodzicki, General of the Crown Artillery, any more than that of the really talented and technically highly developed painter King Stanislaw Leszczynski.

The confirmation by King August III, on the 5th of December, 1746, of an Act raising painting to the dignity of free art and conferring University privileges upon the artists finally released Polish art from the fetters of trade regulations.

## CHAPTER V

THE present powerful and independent art of Poland came into being only in the nineteenth century ; the works of painters like Czechowicz (1689-1775) and Smuglewicz (1745-1807) were only pale semblances of Italian art in the epoch of its decadence. Chodowiecki, of Gdansk, disheartened by the lack of artistic stimulus in Poland, removed to Berlin, where he painted portraits and genre pictures, and made excellent engravings free from the classical bias of the time.

The artistic proclivities of King Stanislaw August Poniatowski brought to the country a host of foreign painters ; of these Baciarelli (1731-1818) remained in Poland for life, while Giovanni Lampi (the elder) and Giuseppe Grassi, fashionable portrait painters, as well as Bernardo Bellotto, called Canaletto, the Frenchman Norblin, and others made a lengthy stay in this land of hospitality. The pupil of the last mentioned, the first of contemporary Polish painters worthy of the name, was A. Orlowski (1777-1832), a lover of horses, and a draughtsman of fiery temperament finding pleasure in the rendering of scenes full of life and movement from the military past.

Again the implacable hand of Fate struck Polish art, ruling it out of the first half of the nineteenth century in lines of red ; French and even German art outdistanced it ; the dilettanti, brought up in the traditions of the time of the last King of Poland, bequeathed nothing noteworthy to posterity. Landscape painting, especially, was a stunted growth. Zaleski (1796-1877) and Gryglewski (1833-76) painted interiors and copied the city streets with uncritical precision. In fact, landscape painting in Poland begins only with Szermentowski, who, though very modest in his choice of motifs as well as in technique, possessed a deep and true feeling for the character and beauty of the country. One of the few painters of real talent was Piotr Michalowski, a pupil of the Paris academies and of Landseer ; he depicted military scenes and horses, and his love of this noble animal descended to the first Polish painter who attained to European reputation—to Juliusz Kossak (1824-99). In the works of the latter painter, horses were the chief subject through which his love of romantic gallantry found expression ; his landscapes, beautiful and sun-flooded, are such as many of us still retain among the joyous memories of youth.

H. Rodakowski, belonging to the same generation, was a portrait painter also reaching the European standard ; but Polish painting made its great debut with the coming of Grottger and Matejko.

Artur Grottger's (1837-67) inspiration flowed from

the same source as did the pain of the great Polish poets of the romantic epoch. He poured forth the whole depth of his soul in the series of marvellous cartoons, "Polonia," "Lithuania," and "War." These are no mere illustrations of the historical drama : they are rather an inspired pean, an ideal and subjective synthesis in which he gives, not so much the actual historical events but the spirit which shone through and animated them. From his cartoons breathe a boundless enthusiasm for heroic deeds and an angelic spirit of sacrifice. Poland treated him as all civilized countries usually treat their national geniuses : she was indifferent to him during his life, to exalt and adore him after his death. In the meantime, only a stipend from Francis Joseph and the help of his friend Count Pappenheim enabled him to live and work in Vienna.

Historical painting had many adherents ; it was essayed by Lesser, though somewhat ineptly, by Simmler, and by Loeffler. W. Gerson was more punctilious and accurate than these, but his attachment to the recipes of Delaroche rendered his work academically chilly.

No parallel can be drawn between this group and Jan Matejko (1838-93). He stands alone, beyond and above all to which the name of school, direction, or tendency can be attached—above the whole art of Europe. A colossus of the breed of the masters of the Renaissance, by his side the greatest painters seem dwarfed. An automath of genius, he averted his face from the pettiness and

drabness of our contemporary life and plunged into the only real world for him—the world of the past, which he resurrected, or, more correctly, created again. One does not stop to consider his technique—that brushwork with which some clever European art jugglers captivate the hearts of the critics—for him it is an innate medium of expression, and is as amazingly great and simple as his genius. No school ever had the shadow of an influence upon him; he worshipped Nature alone, and for him beauty resided in truth and forceful characterization. In his paintings the personages of the old stiff engravings and indifferent miniatures became again living beings, swayed by the whole gamut of passion. From his first works—"Stanczyk," "Kazanie Skargi" ("Skarga's Sermon"), and "Rejtan"—emanates a profound pessimism like that of the world's greatest tragedians, Dante or Michael Angelo. A superhuman force breaks from his later gigantic canvases. The "Battle of Grunwald" is a mighty struggle of Titans, an awe-inspiring mêlée of human bodies, embroidered trappings, horses, armour, banners, all painted with an indomitable impetus, though with extraordinary realism. The wonderful polychromy in St. Mary's Church in Cracow is another of Matejko's achievements, remarkable for its marvellously subtle harmony of colour. The National Museums of Cracow and Warsaw or the Vatican in Rome, where his pictures are to be seen, should and will certainly become the Meccas of all artists.

Contemporaneously with this genius, puny of body but gigantic in spirit, Siemiradzki (1843-1902) and Brandt (1841-1915) followed the path of historical painting. In the works of Henryk Siemiradzki, in spite of the mannerism grafted upon him by the St. Petersburg Academy, famous for its pseudo-classicism, one must admire the purity of colour, especially in the beautiful sun-dappled southern landscape of his pictures, drawn principally from the past of Rome and Greece. Siemiradzki's figures, like those of Alma Tadema, to whom the Polish painter was spiritually akin, have no great psychological depth but are exceedingly beautiful and noble in line. Józef Brandt did not choose epoch-making historical events for his brush, but, concerned chiefly with the decorative side of his compositions, he represented episodes of the past so as to combine figures, horses, and dwellings in tasteful silhouettes, broadly painted and richly coloured. His "Forays," "Cossacks," and "Steppes" won him recognition, not only in his own country and in Munich, where he wintered, but all over the Continent, gaining him many awards there.

His was the time of the vigorous expansion of Polish art, young and earnest in its striving, and full of promise. The atmosphere was charged with new ideas, which revealed themselves in the works of the excellent colourist Witold Pruszkowski (1846-96). At the head of the group of young painters then stood W. Gerson (1831-1901), re-

nowned for his historical pictures and his masterly painting of the nude, but not yet sufficiently appreciated for his landscapes, especially those of mountains, which are in reality the best of his productions. To the group of which he was foremost belonged the old students of the then lately opened Warsaw School of Art, H. Pillati, Gierdziejewski, the clever humorist Kostrzewski, Szermentowski, Bakalowicz, and others, to whose common efforts Warsaw owes the founding in 1859 of the Society of Encouragement of the Fine Arts—the first permanent art-exhibition in Poland.

Munich then ceased to be the only rendezvous of Polish artists, to whom the three governing Powers, jealous of Polish culture, refused the right of instituting art-academies in their own country. They began to gravitate towards Paris, the centre of ever-fresh and vigorous art, and this greatly aided in the elevating of the Polish artistic level to that of other Western countries. Intellectual Europe was then passing through the epoch of realism; the chief representatives of this tendency in painting were Millet, Courbet, and Meissonnier. In Poland appeared Witkiewicz, an excellent painter, a polemical writer of great talent, a deep and original mind, who succeeded in cleansing the Augean stables of Polish criticism. From art he required truth, precision, and depth. His demands, however, differed in some respects from the postulata of French realism, which took no hold on a nation of romantic predisposition, and

had but two prominent representatives in Poland—Maksymilian (1846-74) and Aleksander (1849-1900) Gierymski. Both, though of quite different temperament, had one trait in common—a love of truth, undeterred by the struggle with technical difficulties, which they found pleasure in creating for themselves and successfully overcoming.

The greatest artist of this generation was Józef Chelmonski (1849-1914), a keen observer, who hearkened to the earth's most secret confessions, who espied her in her most serene moments, and rendered all his profound love of Nature with absolute simplicity and sincerity. In his pictures one fails to perceive the tremendous extent of the technical accomplishment; in fact, one forgets the paint; one breathes the true atmosphere of the glorious mornings, ardent noons, bewitching nights. From those canvases, through which flying teams of fiery horses gallop at full speed, there comes to the onlooker the crisp chill of autumn or the frosty breath of vast sweeps of snow; before others one's epidermis seems to feel the contact of hot gusts of wind rushing over the Vistula sands on scorching summer days. Rousseau, Constable, Dupré painted landscape to perfection, but none of these had either Chelmonski's poetry or his mystic love of Nature.

The same spirit animated the painters Wyczółkowski and Falat. The value of their paintings, however, consists less in the philosophical conception than in the mastery of execution. Wyczół-

kowski is a virtuoso of colour in his technically unsurpassed oil-paintings and pastels. Falat is a virtuoso of technique in water-colour, from which no one, except perhaps Besnard, has been able to extract such wealth of colour and such force of tone. Alfred Wierusz Kowalski (1849-1915) does not belong to this group, although his early paintings give him a right to the title of Master.

The founding of illustrated papers about 1859 fostered illustrative art, and brought to light great talents such as Andriolli, Stachiewicz, and later, the most gifted among Polish black and white artists, A. Kamienski, an artist-thinker, bitterly synthetic in his cartoons, excellent in portraiture, and refined in etching. With the illustrated papers came xylography, up to the eighties of the last century the only reproductive art at the disposal of the periodicals. A considerable number of wood-engravers, Schuebeler, Styfi, Zajkowski, Gorazdowski, Nicz, and others were led by Józef Holewinski (born 1848), who developed his art to the acme of perfection and of whose collaboration many great European publishers were justly proud.

The appearance at an exhibition in 1888 of the works of Pankiewicz and Podkowinski disconcerted both the public and the critics. These paintings brought for the first time to Warsaw a gust of impressionism, the healthy elements of which became absorbed by Polish artists, although none of them, not even the two pioneers of the new doctrine, followed it undiscerningly in its primi-

tive form and in its crude ultra-reformatory tendencies.

The wholesome influence of the contact with other countries of Europe is manifest in the works of great painters such as Lenc, Horowitz, Szyndler, Z. Jasinski, Rapacki, Maslowski, Zmurko, Kedzierski, Siestrzencewicz, Olga Boznanska, Augustynowicz, Zofja Stankiewicz, Debicki, Ajdukiewicz, W. Kossak (son), W. Tetmajer, and in some portraits by the old Viennese master K. Pochwalski.

A current which gave new stamina to Polish art and literature in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, neo-romanticism, greatly differed from the romanticism of the fifties, insufficiently independent and not even entirely free from classical leanings. Neo-romanticism availed itself of all the great discoveries of realism and impressionism, complemented by the close study of ancient European and Japanese art. The individualism of the neo-romantics became more marked, their intellect broader, their feelings deeper.

Among the greatest of these is a seeker after new methods of expressing the whole extent of the longings and strife of the modern soul, Jacek Malczewski (born 1855), a painter-poet, the creator of the cycles "The Artist's Golgotha," "The Wandering Derwid," and "The Halting Place," all remarkable for their freedom of symbolic composition, for their psychological subtlety, realism in painting, and admirable exactness of drawing.

Malczewski accepted the professorship of the

Cracow Academy, formerly the School of Art, the directorship of which, after Matejko's death, had been entrusted to J. Falat. There the best of Polish artists were Malczewski's colleagues — Mehoffer, Axentowicz, Pankiewicz, Weiss, Wyspianski ; but the leading spirit of this academy was Stanislawski, a man of immense artistic culture, who knew how to charm the enormous expanses of the Ukrainian landscape, with all its play of changeful light, into small-sized yet broadly painted canvases.

The Warsaw School of Art waited long for its liberation from the tutelage of the St. Petersburg Ministry of Education, which set itself the task of curbing Polish intellectual aspirations. The appointment of two talented directors, K. Stabrowski and K. Krzyzanowski, brought about the desired change by modernizing the trend of the school. Cultural institutions in the Kingdom of Poland were never subsidized by the Government and owed their existence to private initiative, to which is due the imposing building erected for the Warsaw School of Art in 1914. Within its walls art began to prosper under the guidance of the eminent portrait painter S. Lenc, with the co-operation of such artistic forces as Pienkowski, Maslowski, Kotarbinski, Trojanowski, Krzyzanowski, and Ruszczyc. It is interesting to note that the wealth of feeling displayed in the works of the last-named painter strongly stimulated the younger generation. His landscapes are more than simple views of the countryside ; without any assistance of symbols

they are capable of inspiring awe, or stirring feelings of tenderness and melancholy.

The great value of modern Polish decorative art is apparent in the mural paintings of the Szafraniecs' chapel and of the Treasury in Wawel Cathedral. The author of these polychromies, Józef Mehoffer, a painter unrivalled in decoration, is known also for his portraits and fantastic compositions. When twenty-five years of age he won the first prize in an international competition for a design for the stained glass windows for Freiburg Cathedral, which, thanks to his work, became a place of pilgrimage for European artists and critics.

The stained glass windows by Mehoffer and Wyspianski, adorning the Franciscan Church in Craców, afford an excellent opportunity of observing the profound difference between these two talents, equal only in their greatness. There is no realism in the works of Wyspianski (1869-1908), who captivates by the subtlety of his interpretation of type and the extraordinary expressiveness of his line—nervous, powerful, and original. The span of Wyspianski's life was brief, and still the greater part of his time was absorbed by those high literary achievements which gave immortal tragedies to Polish literature ; but the four years he sacrificed to pictorial art left an abundant testimony to his many-sided genius.

Polish sculptors had little scope for the development of their talent. The elder generation, Sosnowski, Oleszczynski, Brodzki, remained faithful to

the classical canons, as did also the most gifted of the succeeding generations, Pius Welonski. T. Rygier, though exceedingly conscientious, brought to art no new ideas; these began to reveal themselves in Polish statuary with the coming of Szymanowski, Wasilewski, Blotnicki, Professor Laszczka, Otto, Professor Breyer, Lewandowski; but the decisive break with the old traditions in sculpture was due to Dunikowski, some of whose works, however, show traces of the influence of French masters.

It is now the turn of the new generation to show their ardour and faith in the great mission of Polish art. Their name is legion, and among them are talents such as Frycz, Czajkowski, Bukowski in decorative art, Buyko, Kamir, Karpinski, Ziomek, Kowalewski, J. Kossak (grandson), Fabjanski, Straszkiewicz in painting, Raszka, Konieczny, Kucharzyk, Jackowski, Puszet, Wilk, and Wittig, the most gifted, in sculpture.

It would be wrong to endeavour to classify these modern artists in schools. It is true that some of them, in different stages of their development, are subject to the influences of the divers conflicting currents flowing through European art, of which they discriminately assimilate only the best constituents, winnowing away all that is artificial, insincere, and hysterical. Another factor which keeps them from making their devotions at the small Chapels of Art is their idealism, which excludes the commercial spirit from the art of

Poland, a spirit which has so often been the undoing of even strong minds among European artists, by tempting them into the fashionable mannerisms that render work saleable. Among Polish artists, competition, free from commercial motives, takes the shape of noble emulation. The receiving juries, whether at the permanent exhibitions of the Society of Encouragement of the Fine Arts in Warsaw, the Societies of the Friends of Art in Cracow and Poznan, or even of private and provincial "salons," dispensed from the necessity of forming a ring to uphold either the followers of their own philosophy or the financial interests of their group, admit all works bearing the stamp of talent. This enables the public to follow the manifestations of Polish art in all their variety at exhibitions, where the venerable classicism of aged masters jostles the most daring attempts of young innovators, without detriment to either.

The freedom enjoyed by Polish artists, unrestrained in their zeal by any side-considerations, permits the casting of an auspicious horoscope for the future of Polish art, which already occupies a conspicuous place among the attainments that enrich the life of the civilized world.

THE NATIONAL  
MUSIC *of* POLAND  
ITS CHARACTER & SOURCES

BY  
**MARGUERITE WALAUX**

With an Introduction by  
**EMIL MLYNARSKI**

*Conductor of the Scottish Orchestra, Formerly Conductor of the  
Warsaw Opera and the Warsaw Symphony Orchestra,  
Director of the Warsaw Conservatoire, etc.*

*A la Pologne indépendante  
j'offre  
l'hommage de cette étude*

MARGUERITE WALAUX.

LONDRES,  
*janvier 1916.*

## INTRODUCTION

*It has afforded me a real pleasure to be allowed to have my name associated with Madame Walaux's study of "The National Music of Poland." And this, not only, I may say, because I am a Polish musician myself, but because in a very few words Madame Walaux has so admirably summed up the history and characteristics of my native music. Her brochure is very informative. Indeed, I am not aware of any existing work in the English language which deals so well in so brief a space with this subject so near to my heart. Apart from this, however, apart altogether from the personal equation, the subject of Polish music is surely one of which the world, and especially the English musical world, with which I have had the honour and the pleasure of being for many years intimately associated, is likely to hear a great deal in the future. My own hope is that such Polish music as I have been able to introduce into my various Slavonic concert programmes in London will be taken, as it were, merely as samples of what Poland possesses.*

*Believe me, in England, far too little is known of the wealth of Polish music. But I live, nevertheless, in the sure and certain hope that a day will dawn, after the war, when the multitude of music-lovers in*

*England will find as warm a place in their hearts for the music of my country, as before the war and since has been found for that of other Slavonic countries.*

*I feel sure that the more one hears of the genuine Polish music the more one comes to love it for its emotionalism, its definite character, and its beauty, for that, in point of fact, which gives the breath of life to the music which appeals directly to you English.*

*It is my own hope that from a new Poland, which is inevitable after the war, the national musical element will be more strongly developed in the younger school of composers, and that its expression will become crystallized.*

EMIL MLYNARSKI.

## THE NATIONAL MUSIC OF POLAND

WHILE still boys and girls our young hearts were stirred with admiration for a people so valiant as the Polish people have undoubtedly been at every stage of their history. That noble national character which marks the movements of a Sobieski as he sallies forth to the succour of Austria sore menaced by the invasion of the Turk, or the generous spontaneity of a Kosciuszko, embarking for free America to range himself resolutely on the side of the weaker in the fight for the independence of the United States, the heroic death of Prince Joseph Poniatowski, indelibly stamp on every young and generous spirit an impression of beautiful and elevated thought.

In later years, when we get to know the complete story of that scandalous political intervention in the affairs of Poland which historians dignify by the name of high diplomacy, our admiration and sympathy only grow greater than ever. This high access of mind in which we rest has never been better expressed than by George Brandès : "We love Poland," he says, "as we love freedom.

Poland is a symbol, a symbol of all for which the best of the human race have either loved or fought.”<sup>1</sup>

We have only to consider the history of the oppression of Poland, says the same Brandès, to find there on the one hand “all that is most hateful and despicable,” and on the other hand “all that is most lovable and lustrous. In the first the contrasts of human life are found in bold relief. In the second, the cosmos is concentrated as in an essence.”

How can any true-hearted spirit avoid cherishing a sincere and continual interest in the history of such a country?—a country whose chief crime, in the eyes of the States who combined together to divide and then destroy her, was this, that she possessed a civilization distinct from their own, a civilization which united her with all that was most progressive in Western Europe.

Brandès, in his noteworthy work on Poland, which is interesting both as the impressions of a traveller and also as the result of close and intimate study of Polish literary and artistic history, speaks of the Poles as a people dowered with enthusiasm which yet needed to be corrected by practical experience, as endowed with vivid imagination, quite uncommon intelligence, and beautiful, exalted feeling, as loving all intense and delicate, sensuous and intellectual enjoyments,” but also, above all, who worshipped independence to the point of insanity,

<sup>1</sup> “Poland,” p. 48.

freedom to the extent of the *liberum veto*, and who even now, when they had lost their independence and freedom, had remained faithful to their old love.

The German Chancellor, Bethmann-Hollweg, on the day following the fall of Warsaw, speaking in the Reichstag, paid a high tribute to this spirit of independence which the Polish nation has retained in the face of any trial, and which nothing has been able to humiliate. And it is this national characteristic which manifests itself to an intense degree in the works of writers and poets of this oppressed nation.

But it is not only the study of Polish literature, above all that of the nineteenth century, which endows us with an understanding of the aspirations and the soul of this people, it is equally by the revelation of her fine arts and her music that we are enabled to grasp and comprehend them.

Music is our subject here, the national music of Poland, in which is revealed in a striking manner in the works of her composers, and above all in those of Chopin, Moniuszko, or Noskowski, the soul of this heroic people in all its individuality, agonies, joys, hopes, aspirations, loves and hates, and in its most marked peculiarities. From this last point of view the two songs, Wibicki's "Jeszcze Polska nie zginela" ("Poland not yet Lost") and Ujejski's "Z dymem Pozarow" ("With the Smoke of the Fires") are characteristic. These songs express the despair of the younger race at seeing the hopes of Poland brought to naught, and reflects the lofty,

burning earnestness, the love of country, as a religion.

Wibicki's song, the expression of the bright hopes of the race, even after the blow of the third partition has fallen, is an extremely careless, merry song, the ballad of heroic thoughtlessness, joy to live, to sing, to fight. The first is a psalm, the second a march which approaches a mazurka.

It ought to be borne in mind that in Polish music melancholy never leads to despair. There is always something hopeful in the most intense sadness. We find this impression again, moreover, in the music of Chopin, who draws it into the rhythm of the popular melodies of his country, idealized by his poetic nature. We find it, above all, in the "Prélude in B Minor," which is to some extent the realization of it. Kleczynski explains it for us thus: "The picture which is formed is that of drops of rain falling at regular intervals, which by their continual patter bring the mind to a state of sadness; a melody full of tears is heard through the rush of the rain; in passing to the key of C sharp minor it rises from the depths of the bass to a prodigious crescendo, indicative of the terror which Nature in its deathly aspect excites in the heart of man. Here, again, the form does not allow the ideas to become too sombre; notwithstanding the melancholy which seizes you, a feeling of tranquil grandeur revives you."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Kleczynski, "F. Chopin, De l'interprétation de ses œuvres," pp. 26 and 27.

The soul of Poland, the inspiration of these melodies, is an impulse towards hope and liberty ; this liberty is the goal, the end to which she aspires. This is contested with her through the centuries, but she carries on the struggle without allowing herself to be weakened.

This all-powerful idea is found again and again in Polish music, in its rhythm, its inspiration, and in its melancholy charm. This melancholy, in which there always sounds an under-current of hope, is rather the outcome of the thoughtful and sentimental temperament than of the dejection of despair occasioned by the misfortunes of the fatherland. Here is no resigned, quiescent spirit, but the true soul of the heroic Pole, chivalrous, careless, and light-hearted, which delivers itself of sadness in songs, but whose joy is tinged with intense melancholy. Here is the unchained spirit of Poland, which no Government has ever been able to fetter, and which, notwithstanding the centuries of suffering, has always kept untouched her individuality, originality, and romanticism, of which poetry and music are the living and harmonious manifestations.

The Poles are gifted with an essentially musical temperament, and their taste in music is recognized all over the world. It is not true, however, that this taste and aptitude is visible only in the last century.

Polish music is of as ancient an origin as her history ; this fact will be seen by the following

account of the principal stages of her development through the centuries.

According to Sowinski,<sup>1</sup> the history of music in Poland may be divided into three distinct parts :—

1. Early music dating from the appearance of music in the country, and finishing in the reigns of the Sigismunds.

2. Music of the Golden Age, including several phases, and attaining its highest perfection during the sixteenth century, following next the decadence of literature. In this general shipwreck only a few works of religious composers survive ; these even are forgotten. This period terminated in 1764.

3. Modern music from the reign of Stanislas August Poniatowski to our own times.

In Poland, as elsewhere, the art of music is affected by many outside influences, before attaining originality and assuming a truly national character. For many years, following the example of many other European nations, it found inspiration from the Italian School. The grave beauty of this music and its sweetness seemed to fit it at this time to be the melodious organ of Christianity. Bohemians and Poles, the first Christians among northern nations, went to Rome to study there, and feel the inspiration of the artistic beauties of the eternal city. There it was that St. Adalbert studied the elements of the Gregorian Chant. In 995 he composed the hymn of “Boga Rodzica”

\* “Polish and Slav Musicians” (1857).

(the Mother of God, worshipped by the Poles and Slavs), which is found engraved on the saint's tomb. It was not till the eleventh century that the ecclesiastical chant became known in Poland.

Pope John VIII gave permission for the use of the national language in the services of the Church ; this permission gave a national character to religious music in Poland, whereas in other countries sacred music progressed no farther than the Gregorian Chant or the Plain Chant. At this time there are found in Polish music charming airs for Christmas, which, together with certain old canticles, made up the first song-books.

From the fourteenth to the sixteenth century a number of composers flourished in Poland ; l'Abbé Witowski composed several religious chants in his native tongue. Jean de Kampa Lodzia, Bishop of Posen, is identified with hymns of great value. Later Wenceslas Brzozowski (fifteenth century), poet, priest, and musician, left the *Canzionale*, a collection including setting for several voices. The golden age of the Sigismunds was also productive of noble compositions, the most important of which was, without doubt, the *Psalter* of Nicholas Gomolka.

For a long time in Poland only sacred music existed, inspired by religion and the Church. At this time, moreover, all the arts looked to religion for their inspiration, as to a never-failing fount. The history of architecture can be learned only by a study of the churches ; painting dealt exclu-

sively with subjects drawn from the life of Christ ; and music itself was seldom of anything but a sacred character. Dramatic music was united with the religious drama, in which satiric songs occasionally made their appearance.

There was, however, some military music, which consisted solely in flourishes of trumpets and cymbals, and there was also Court music. The temperament of the early Poles led them to love music ; they had a preference for the glad and joyous rather than the sad and melancholy. Hymns, however, charmed their ears, and they amused themselves by listening to them, but it was their characteristic national airs that held the greatest attraction, the melody, accent, and rhythm of which brought out in a wonderful way the feeling inherent in the nation.

It would be difficult to compile a history of these Folk Songs. Many of them have never been written down, and are handed on by tradition and by the ancient chronicles, which give merely the title and the words. Songs exist on every theme : historic, bucolic, erotic, etc. Others accompany Polish dances, and their rhythm is still a source of inspiration to modern Polish composers, as is the case with the Polonaise and the Mazurek. There are numberless folk songs in existence belonging to every period, and even to the last century ; François Karpinski is responsible for some charming examples, the words and music of which are familiar to every one.

The *Polonaise* is one of the most characteristic manifestations of the art of music in Poland. The germ of it may be recognized in the motive of an old Christmas song, and in the air of "Wzlobie lezy" the rhythm and the finale of this old dance of striking originality is found, the music of which resounded at the pompous feasts of the old Polish lords and at the Court of the Kings.

The exact date of the invention of the Polonaise is not known. The Court must have been its birth-place. Karasowski<sup>1</sup> tells us that "tradition assigns to the Polonaise the following origin: when the dynasty of the Jagellons died out, Henry of Anjou, son of Catherine de Medicis, was in 1573 elected King of Poland. The following year he received the representatives of the nation in solemn state at Cracow Castle, and the gentlemen made their wives slowly defile before the King, keeping step to an accompaniment of music. Every time a foreign prince was elected to the throne this ceremony was repeated, and from it was gradually developed the national dance of the Polonaise. It became a political dance. It is really a march, a processional dance, grave, moderate, flowing, and by no means stereotyped. It is at once the symbol of war and love, a vivid pageant of martial splendour, a weaving, cadenced, voluptuous dance, the pursuit of shy, coquettish woman by the fierce warrior. Despite its essentially masculine mould, it is given a feminine title; formerly it was called "Polonais." Liszt wrote

<sup>1</sup> "Life of Chopin."

of it: "In this form the noblest traditional feelings of ancient Poland are represented." The Polonaise is the true and purest type of Polish national character, as in the course of centuries it was developed partly through the political position of the kingdom towards east and west, partly through an indefinable, peculiar inborn disposition of the entire race. In the development of the Polonaise everything co-operated which specifically distinguished the nation from others. In the Poles of departed times manly resolution was united with glowing devotion to the object of their love. Their knightly heroism was sanctioned by high, soaring dignity, and even the laws of gallantry and the national costume exerted an influence over the turns of the dance. The Polonaises are the keystone in the development of this form. They belong to the most beautiful of Chopin's inspirations. With their energetic rhythm they electrify, to the point of exerted demonstration, even the sleepiest of indifference. Chopin was born too late, and left his native hearth too early to be initiated into the original character of the Polonaise as danced through his own observation. But what others imparted to him with regard to it was supplemented by his fancy and his nationality.

Mickiewicz, the national poet of Poland in the nineteenth century, consecrated some beautiful verses to the Polonaise, in his celebrated "Pan Tadeusz," Book 12, "Let us love one another."

The melody of the Polonaise is sometimes simple,

but its rhythm is somewhat martial and of a war-like enchantment. It is solemn and possesses great fascination. The conclusion suggests the stately manners of the Middle Ages. Written in triple time, it is grave, but gaiety is not debarred, which rendered it popular among the people, whose favourite dance it was up to the close of the seventeenth century.

The movement of the *Mazur* or *Mazurek* is accentuated in more lively fashion than that of the Polonaise. It is also written in triple time, but more licence is allowed, and the contretemps is marked. The *Mazurek* is full of feeling, and is often melancholy; it is truly poetical, and is representative of the national character. Emanating from the people, it was adopted by all classes; it was claimed with joy among the rich, and charmed young and old alike.

The first *Mazureks* date from the players on the lute in the fifteenth century. They were of popular composition, and were of simple construction with two repetitions, with a prelude or "ritournelle," a kind of improvisation of the village fiddlers, and the words were in praise of the simple life. Later their range was enlarged. They are exceedingly numerous. Some treat of history, others of the rustic life, dancing or love. Poets of renown composed words for them, which were set to music by celebrated composers. The *Mazurek* is the true national song of Poland, the embodiment of the national character. Chopin made it popular in

Europe, and Polish opera drew on it to a considerable extent. Chopin penetrated the most deeply into the national sanctuary, and his melancholy genius made more than one tender heart weep and vibrate. Liszt says: "Coquetteries, varieties, fantasies, elegies, vagues, emotions, passions, conquests, struggles upon which the safety or favours of others depend, all, all meet in this dance." He gives a wild, whirling, highly coloured narrative of the Mazurka with a coda of extravagant praise on the beauty and fascination of Polish women.

In Poland the Mazurka is not the dance which is called by that name, but a long, difficult, and impassioned national dance, in which the gentlemen and ladies, though they dance hand in hand, constantly take different steps in the same time.

The *Krakowiak* (French *Cracovienne*) is born of the people. Its movement is quick and bright, and it is written in double time. Polish peasants dance it in national costume, which adds to the picturesque appearance of the dance; added to this there are often satirical couplets, which the dancer sings to his partner. The poems of Miaskowski (1622) prove that the Krakowiak originated in the seventeenth century.

The *Dumy* or *Dumki* (reveries) are of earlier origin, and their music is of a particular kind: they modulate from the minor key to the relative major, and vice versa. This minor modulation gives them a plaintive and heartrending effect.

They are nearly all in double time, and very slow, and were accompanied formerly by the *guzla* or *gousla*, an ancient Slav instrument which has been replaced in modern times by the *bandura* or *bandurka* and the *téorbe*. The Ukrainian dumkis (wrongly termed Russian songs) are sung generally without accompaniment. Among the Zaporogues there were bandouristes, who sang a kind of dumki accompanied on the bandura, the sad and yearning melodies of which filled the soul with emotion and melancholy.

Lithuania, the history of which has been intimately connected with that of Poland, has supplied us with many popular songs; for example, the *Dainos* (a gay air). These tunes are simple, sweet, and fresh, and are sung in Lithuanian. Some of them are of very early origin. Modern composers have made collections of them. Rhésa has translated a book of them into German with music, under the title "Dainos, or Lithuanian Folk Songs," and Chopin composed one.

The early kings of Poland used to love and patronize music. They were greeted by the sound of music when they entered one of the towns of their kingdom, or when they visited the castle of one of those lords whose wealth was the astonishment of Europe. They surrounded themselves with hired musicians at great expense, and lute-players and other performers of all kinds formed part of their suite continually. The nobles, too, had their orchestras, and the lordly dwellings echoed to the

sound of music, which accompanied all their feasts and festivals.

King Sigismund I and his son, Sigismund August, professed a veritable cult for the art of music. Under their reigns it attained a high state of perfection. It was, in truth, the music of the Great Century. The Court was the show-ground of numberless talents. Musicians were paid fabulous sums. In the Royal choir composed of celebrated musicians, among whom were many Italians, the combined effect produced was indeed wonderful. It was also in the reign of Sigismund I that the first college or chapel for the celebration of the Mass to music was instituted. No other country in Europe possessed such an institution, which received the name of College of the Roraristes, and was attached to the cathedral at Cracow. Its foundation dates from 1542. The original of the Royal Charter given to this chapel, and its original music, can be found among the archives of the cathedral. It was productive of marvellous results in the interpretation of sacred music at this time. The sixteenth century was fruitful, moreover, in masterpieces, as is illustrated by the works of Broscius Jacques Lubelczyk, Gorczyn, Liban de Lignica, Spangenberg, Sigismund Lauxman, Simon Starowolski, l'Abbé Gorczycki, and many others.

Under Sigismund III music attained to its highest degree of perfection in Poland. His chapels surpassed in talent and magnificence anything previously seen and heard. Jean Zamoyski, Batory,

Wladislas IV, Jean Sobieski, proved themselves ardent patrons of music, and endeavoured to spread the taste for it among the people, whose efforts they encouraged. At that time there was, perhaps, no other country in Europe where music was held in such high honour. Nearly every lord and every high dignitary had his own theatre, orchestra, opera, and even ballet. The reign of the Kings of Saxony marked the progress in particular of instrumental music. August II was generous to the point of folly in the upkeep of his chapel, and his orchestra was recognized as the finest in Germany.

After centuries of brilliance, music in Poland passed through several phases. It followed in the wake of political decadence, and its progress from that time was arrested. The institutions of sacred music were no more. All perished ; but dramatic music had new birth in the reign of Stanislas August Poniatowski.

At the end of the eighteenth century dire misfortunes overwhelmed this unfortunate country, and there was a revival of religious music. New canticles were composed, as well as fine music for the Mass. The Church from that time had her modern repertory. At Posen were published a series of sacred chants to be sung during the Mass. Elsner set them to music later on the words of Brodzinski, and his example was followed by Felinski, who was inspired by the words of Wenzyk, and Kurpinski by those of Minasowicz.

Sacred music was always very remarkable in

Poland, and, above all, at Cracow, which is, according to Sowinski, "the cradle of the music of the Church."

Stanislas August Poniatowski had an enormous influence on the development of the music of his country. He saw the opening of the modern era, which is characterized by the appearance of the National Polish Opera.

This King adored music in all its forms; his choir, composed of native and foreign musicians, was one of the best of the time. His example was followed by the great lords, several of whom were recognized as distinguished performers. In the castles were excellent orchestras. Musicians were well looked after there, and certain great lords became notable composers; for example, Prince Michel Oginski (1765-1833), whose works, and, above all, his charming Polonaises, had distinctive national characteristics and became popular in Europe. At this time of rapid progress in the art of music and its general perfection in Europe, the Polish opera made its first appearance (1778). Italian opera had been in existence at the Court of Warsaw since 1633, but the poetic and literary movement of the end of the eighteenth century created the Polish opera, of interest by its character and its direct relation with the youth of Chopin.

The first Polish operas composed by Kaminski and Stefani followed the German style and the fashion of the French comic opera. The new and original element was found in the employment of

popular themes. Their subjects were taken from peasant life—"Krakowiaki i Gorale" ("Cracovians and Mountaineers") of Stefani. The ideas of these two composers were taken up again at the beginning of the eighteenth century by J. Elsner, the professor of Chopin, and by Ch. Kurpinski, creators of the first historical Polish operas. At this time the national opera became the most perfect expression of the musical art in Poland, and Elsner was vexed and surprised that his good-natured pupil, Chopin, never became the composer of operas, and that he confined himself to musical forms of less magnitude.

Boguslawski contributed largely to the advancement of the national opera. It was he who produced the six operas of Kaminski, which enjoyed considerable success. He translated the "Axur" of Salieri, with fine results (1793). But the greatest work of this time was the "Cracovians and Mountaineers" of Stefani. Its success was immense. Elsner composed several operas which met with great approval, as well as an operetta of Kamienski and an opera of Caiētana, the master of the chapel of Stanislas August.

All this is a proof that music was held in great esteem in Poland, and that it had been cultivated there from an early date; but it is only subsequent to Chopin that this music attracted the attention of foreign nations. In truth Chopin was the first Polish musician who gained for Poland a world-wide fame in the world of music. There

are two different reasons for this. The first is that Chopin was the inventor of an entirely new pianoforte life. His music invoked general admiration, both by the exquisite form and by the sublime beauty in it. Centuries of intense and uninterrupted work are usually necessary before a nation can produce a genius such as Chopin. As we have seen in previous pages of our historical exposition of Polish music, this work was accomplished slowly in Poland, and the great-hearted musician, loved and admired by all, was worthy of the effort.

The second reason was set forth by Schumann and Liszt. "How can we understand," asks Schumann in his letters, "why Chopin interests us so greatly, attracts us more than other composers of our day? It is because of the strong and distinctive nationality that animates him: the nationality of Poland."

Liszt, after having heard Chopin's "Funeral March," declared, "A Pole alone could have written that funeral march, because all the inborn sublimity and introspect of a people cries out, through Chopin, in that marvellous inspiration, which seems the mourning cry of a whole nation following the bier of their dearest hopes."

Count Tarnowski<sup>1</sup> is perfectly right when he says that, whether it be with the inexpressible melancholy and forlorn wailings of a funeral march, or the reckless abandon of a tarantella,

"Chopin, as Revealed by Extracts from his Diary," pp. 6-8.

it is only Chopin who can express to foreigners that inspiration, original, melancholy, homely, and patriotic, which is the feature of Polish poetry, because his music is enlivened by that same inspiration and impressed by it. It is, as it were, a translation of that poetry. Therefore it is in the history of Poland, subsequent to the partition, that his music has its great significance and merit. It contains in itself the essence and expression of the spirit which created Polish poetry. It represents to the outside world the leading spirit of the Polish nation so thoroughly that Chopin has acquired glory for himself and for his countrymen, a citizenship in the realm of music.

There is a likeness between Chopin and his contemporary Polish poets of the Romantic school; there is similarity of feeling and inspiration; there are even some similarities of disposition. And if to this be added the charm of a nature strangely noble and refined, with beautiful and exalted feeling, with a rich, fervid imagination, with quite an unusual intelligence, with rare tenderness to suffering in others, one discovers elements that go to make one of the most enchanting and interesting personalities of Poland.

To sensitiveness, tenderness, and a genuine delicacy of feeling he united a childlike gaiety and humour. It is true that his moments of humour and forgetfulness never lasted long, as in some of the mazurkas, where the sincere, almost rude, gaiety ends in the most intense despondency.

There is a widespread, but erroneous, opinion that the music of Chopin lacks manliness, moral and intellectual. But, as Huneker has pointed out, if Chopin's manners were a trifle feminine, his brain was masculine, electric, and his soul courageous. His Polonaises, Ballads, Scherzi, and Études need a mighty grip—a grip mental and physical.

Chopin was born in 1809, near Warsaw. In infancy he could not hear music without crying. In 1827 Chopin left his regular studies at the Warsaw Lyceum, and devoted his time to music. "He was much in the country," says James Huneker in his biography of Chopin, "and singing of the Polish peasants, thus laying the corner-stone of his art as a national composer." In 1828 he went to Berlin, and this trip gave him a foretaste of the outer world. Stephen Heller, who saw Chopin in 1830, described him as pale, of delicate health, and not destined for a long life. He was constantly admonished by his relatives to keep his coat closed. Chopin went to Berlin under the protection of his father's friend, Professor Jarocki, to attend a great scientific congress. Count Tarnowski relates that Chopin left Warsaw with a light heart. On the way home he stopped at a place called Zullichau, and improvized on Polish airs so charmingly that the departure was delayed.

Tarnowski declares that the Polish poet Julius Slowacki was Chopin's warmest friend and a starting-point of inspiration for the composer.

In July 1829 Chopin arrived at Vienna, where his improvisation on the Polish tune called "Chmiel" and a theme from "La Dame Blanche" stirred up much enthusiasm at the Karntnerthor Theatre. The Press was favourable. According to Huneker his style was admired, and voted original. A remark by a lady, "It is a pity his appearance is so insignificant," reached the composer's ear and caused him an evil quarter of an hour; for he was morbidly sensitive, but being, like most Poles, secretive, managed to hide it. Encouraged by his triumph, Chopin gave, on August 18th, a second concert on the same stage. This time he played the Polish "Krakowiak."

By September 12th, after a brief sojourn in Breslau, Chopin was again safe at home in Warsaw. About this time he fell in love with Constantia Gladowska, a singer and pupil of the Warsaw Conservatoire. According to Huneker,<sup>1</sup> Chopin shrank from coarseness of all sorts, and the Fates only know what he must have suffered at times from George Sand and her gallant band of retainers. "To this impressionable man," writes Huneker, "Parisian badinage—not to call it anything stronger—was positively antipathetical."

On March 17, 1830, Chopin gave his first concert in Warsaw. In November 1830, before the outbreak of the Polish Revolution, he left Warsaw for Vienna.

"A thousand times," says Huneker, "he thought

<sup>1</sup> "Chopin."

of renouncing his artistic ambitions and rushing to Poland to fight for his country. He did not do so, and this indecision—it was not cowardice—is our gain. Chopin put his patriotism, his wrath, and his heroism into his Polonaises. That is why we have them now."

At Stuttgart, when Chopin heard of the capture of Warsaw by the Russians on September 8, 1831, his agitation was terrible. "Sometimes," writes he in his diary, "I groan, suffer, and despair at the piano! O God, move the earth that it may swallow the humanity of this century! May the most cruel fortune fall upon the French, that they did not come to our aid."

He did not go to Warsaw, but at the end of September started for France, arriving early in October 1831. "A neurotic man," says Huneker, "his tissues trembling, his sensibilities aflame, the offspring of a nation doomed to pain and partition, it was quite natural for him to go to France—Poland has ever been her historic client—the France that overheated all Europe. Chopin, born after two revolutions, the true child of insurrection, chose Paris for his second home."

Count Tarnowski considers that the time at Warsaw was the free, peaceful, and happy period of Chopin's life; the other (when he lived abroad) was marred by the storms and sorrows of later years. Warsaw is connected with the thought and love of his country; the other with the memory of that other love which poured so much bitterness

into his life. All this preyed upon a tragic nature, that state bordering on despair which is perceptible throughout his compositions. Possibly such a nature was predestined never to attain equanimity; yet if his surroundings had been different, if he had remained in his country and in the ordinary way of life, in course of time his health might have become better and his talent would have developed with more virility. Thrown suddenly out of gear, as it were, he became more and more unbalanced, and his talent developed in the direction of effeminate tenderness and sentimentality. This disposition appears soon after his departure from Warsaw.

Soon after his arrival in Paris, Chopin was known throughout Europe. It seems that the peculiarly Polish form of the Mazurek became the natural expression of the one feeling which was the background of Chopin's disposition, as it was of Poland's—namely, sorrow. This sorrow breaks forth freely in all his compositions; but it is strange that when he composes under the influence of bitterness or despair he pours his genius into the most varied forms, excepting only that of the mazurka.

What strikes one in Chopin is the refined style of the romance, the morbid charm of a play full of caress and tenderness. One has not always understood, said Count Tarnowski, that behind the strangeness of his rhythms resided the deepest classic culture.

Like poetry, the music of Chopin is the flower of romanticism, not only because, as a composer, he belongs to the school of romanticism, but much more because his music has the same charm, the same character, the same failings as Polish romantic poetry. It has, like that poetry, the highest tenderness of sentiment; it has originality and a great richness of forms and ideas; it has also much vivacity and colouring of imagination, and in that imagination there is something veiled, ethereal, and undefined, alike through sensitive feelings and patriotic inspiration. It has faults: an overstrained melancholy and an interior discord that appear in thoughts which are sometimes incomprehensible and in a strange and sometimes eccentric execution. The Polish emigration gave to the country the most beautiful works in literature. The same may be said of the music of Chopin which, under the influence of the same feelings, produced the highest inspirations and the most Polish in spirit and form.

To give a competent analysis of Chopin's works would require a volume to itself, and that will not be our purpose. To appreciate their importance we must consider the circumstances amid which they were written. The period to which his earliest composition belongs was one of apparent calm. After the Battle of Waterloo, which took place between the peaceful settlements of the two Congresses of Vienna, the nations began to breathe freely once more. In Poland national

pride grew stronger and stronger and impelled the true lovers of their country to an active propaganda for the improvement of its internal affairs. Men of genius whose lives were devoted to the search after knowledge threw all their energies into the discoveries of new truths and to casting fresh light on old ones. Everywhere was the breath of a new spiritual life full of soaring aspiration; and rising from the exhaustion of the Napoleonic wars, the nation seriously gave itself to the revival of art and literature.

A passionate battle began between the two schools of poetry: the classic and the romantic. The great Polish poet Mickiewicz, the author of "Grazyna," "Dziady," and "Pan Tadeusz," stood at the head of the romantic school, and by his genius triumphed over the other.

According to Brandès,<sup>1</sup> the Polish literature of the nineteenth century bears a peculiar stamp, apart from the peculiarities issuing from the national character, in that it developed in a country which had recently ceased to exist as an independent State. For this reason the literature, and especially the poetry, came to supply, as it were, the place of a national life which was lost at the partition of the State. It gained thereby in spiritual exaltation, but necessarily lost in variety and freedom.

Polish romanticism, as Brandès masterly describes it, is intelligent and imaginative, splendour-loving and visionary, with a tendency to chivalrous,

<sup>1</sup> Page 192.

virtuous, and religious aspirations. It was akin to the French in its fickleness ; it differed from the French in the nature of that fickleness. The Frenchman is capricious when his native rationalism leads him to shatter his historic heritage, the Pole when temperament or enthusiasm carries him away.

Throughout the romantic literature of Poland we find here and there features so realistic that they do not seem to belong to the period. Some of the poets carry realism so far that they even introduce living or recently deceased persons into their poems. But that which is peculiarly Polish is that, hand in hand with the hankering after reality and futurity, there is an unconquerable tendency to abstraction, allegory, superstition. "They are," says Brandès, "at once realists and spiritualists. Two circumstances united to make their poems abstract and allegorical : first, the propensity to mysticism which lay in the inmost recesses of their souls and which, after having slumbered for a while, was easily awakened in them all since they had been educated as Catholics from the first ; in the next place, the political oppression, the consideration of their censorship which compelled them to describe their thoughts by circumlocution and to etherealize the outlines of the beings whom they painted. In reality, Polish poetry, by its very obscure and prophetic character, has had a greater bearing on the future of the nation than a logical and convincing poetry could have had. It inspired

perseverance, self-reliance, firm faith in the future, and obstinate optimism, which were so much the more remarkable as no country seemed likely to offer a more fruitful soil for pessimism."

Slowacki, Krasinski, and especially Mickiewicz, the most celebrated poets of modern romanticism in Poland, whose works and poetry reflect the most peculiarly national characteristics, impressed an intense influence on the music of their time, and they are, it is said, the leaders who preceded Chopin into the artistic world. The music of Chopin, inspired almost entirely by his country, its rural life, its dances, its past splendour, its sorrows and desperate fights, seems the harmony of the soul of romantic poetry. Living among young Poles, who were enthusiastic about folk-poetry, regarding it—not without reason—as the basis of all poetry, Chopin sought out national melodies for himself, seeking by careful artistic presentation to secure for them a lasting place in musical literature. In this he succeeded much better than any other composer has done. No one was so well able to reproduce the peculiarly melancholy strain which runs through all the Polish melodies. A spontaneity, at once noble and natural, pervades Chopin's music. It is the complement, or rather the illustration, of the national poetry. An eminent Polish historian has said: "Chopin's music is of supreme importance because it represents the nation more gloriously in the domain of the love of art than that of any other composer. It gives us the

honour of an independent position such as we had never attained before."

Chopin's earliest works are undoubtedly the result of the musical tendencies of the age. Traditional forms opened to him the gates of the temple where the greatest masters of the pianoforte sit enthroned. But into these forms he infused his own creative genius. Chopin's imagination struck deeper chords than previous pianoforte composers; he inaugurated a new era and cut a way for himself, not for the sake of surpassing others, but by the unconscious impulse of his own originality. Most of his works are written for the piano, the instrument he preferred to any other. He shows also some preference for the violoncello. "Its elegiac tone was in harmony with his own nature."

Chopin was very partial to the dance forms—mazurka, polonaise, waltz, tarantelle, cracovienne, and bolero—which he was the first truly to idealize, but of the large number of his mazurkas it is difficult to say which is the best. Some of those mazurkas are perhaps among the most effective which, in spite of the tripping dance measure, display melancholy, as though the composer had indulged in a momentary diversion and neurotic intoxication to return the more sadly to his original gloom.

"The plaintive little mazurka of two lines," says Huneker, "the Seventh Prelude is a mere silhouette of the national dance. Yet in its measure is compressed all Polish Mazovia."

"Do you know Chopin's sorrowful mazurkas," asks Ehlert, "those pathetic dances in which the deepest, the most heartfelt sorrow has donned red buskins, to weep itself to death amid a bacchanal tumult? I have one of those in my own mind now: anything sadder you can scarcely imagine:—

Ye still must dance, poor feet so weary  
In gay shoes drest,  
Though 'twere for ye a fate less sad and dreary  
'Neath earth to rest.

Poor Chopin! Was he afflicted by the sorrow of his people, or by a secret woe, a fatality of love?"

Chopin's *polonaises* may be divided into two groups: the one those with marked rhythm, displaying the martial element; the other, the dreamy, melancholy feeling peculiar to the master. The "Fantasie Polonaise," in A flat major, holds a position distinct from both these groups. It is intended to represent the national struggle, and concludes, therefore, with a proud hymn of victory. Chopin's belief in the ultimate victory of the Polish nation after its many bitter trials, a feeling so well depicted in the poetry of Mickiewicz, Krasinski, and Slowacki, the greatest poets of that period, speaks out clearly in this, the most finished of his larger pianoforte works.

Chopin's *waltzes*, musically considered, offer less of interest and novelty than his other compositions. What they lose in the rhythm of the dances they

gain in innate grace and outward brilliancy. The most interesting are those which are pervaded by that peculiar, dreamy, melancholy vein which is one of the chief charms of Chopin's inspiration.

It has been said of the Chopin waltzes that they are dances of the soul and not of the body. Their animated rhythms, insouciant airs, and brilliant, coquettish atmosphere represent the true atmosphere of the ballroom. They are exquisite exemplars of social intimacy and aristocratic abandon. Schumann declares that the dancers of these valses should at least be countesses.

The four *ballads* are amongst the finest and most original of his works. Chopin said to Schumann that he had been inspired to the creation of the ballads by some poems of Mickiewicz. There is about them a certain narrative character which is particularly well rendered.

"None of Chopin's compositions," says Niecks, "surpasses in masterliness of form and beauty and poetry of content his ballads." Louis Ehlert says of the four ballads: "Each differs entirely from the others, and they have but one thing in common —their romantic working and the nobility of their motives."

In the *nocturnes*, Chopin not only introduced the dramatic element, but displayed in a striking manner a marvellous enrichment of harmony of the resources of pianoforte composition. The F Sharp Nocturne is the most popular. Kleczynski finds that the doppio movement is extremely striking,

and the entire piece is saturated with young life and love and feeling of goodwill to men.

Chopin also deserves special honour for having perfected the *study*. Some of his studies serve purely technical purposes, but others are intellectually interesting. Heller wrote: "Chopin's Seventh Study engenders the sweetest sadness, the most enviable torments, and if, in playing it, one feels oneself insensibly drawn towards mournful and melancholy ideas, it is a disposition of the soul which I prefer to all others. Alas! How I love these sombre and mysterious dreams, and Chopin is the god who created them."

Niecks does not think Chopin created a new type in the *preludes*: "They are too unlike one another in form and character." The Sixteenth Prelude is the most brilliant. Full of imagination, life, caprice, and stormy dynamics, it is the darling of the virtuoso. Its pregnant introduction is like a madly jutting rock from which the eagle spirit of the composer rushes upward. The Fourth Prelude, in E minor, is, as Niecks says, "a little poem, the exquisitely sweet, languid pensiveness of which defies description." The Fifth, in D minor, is Chopin at his happiest. There is a dewy freshness, a joy in life that puts to flight much of the morbid tittle-tattle about Chopin's sickly soul. The Sixth Prelude, in B minor, is doleful, pessimistic. "It precipitates the soul into frightful depression" (George Sand).

The sixteen Polish songs published by Fontana after Chopin's death were written without any title.

If Chopin met with any new and beautiful poetry in his native tongue, he would set it to music, not for publication, but for his own pleasure.

The last mazurka, "Senza Fine," composed a few days before he died, is sad, very sad, like the last days of the great master. He showed by this swan song, and by his yearning after the hour of his happy youth, that in the very last hour of his creative inspiration he remained faithful to his national music and to his sorely tried fatherland.

Chopin introduced the mazurka into modern music. Although exemplified in popular songs, they are his sole property, because the master, while keeping the rustic and popular character of these national songs, has changed the form, ennobled the melody, and enriched the contents.

In addition to Frédéric Chopin, Poland during the nineteenth century has given another musical genius to the world—Stanislas Moniuszko (1819-72).

In fact, if musical genius is characterized by loftiness of spirit and a wonderful subtlety of human feeling, if it is an extraordinary creative force, united to astonishing power to soar towards new regions hitherto unattainable, Moniuszko was undoubtedly a genius.

But as Mr. Polinski, a Polish musical critic rightly observes,<sup>1</sup> there are composers in whom genius is allied with talent, that is to say the faculty of adapting rules and known means to an end, theory to practice. Such were Mozart and Wagner.

<sup>1</sup> *Muzyka Polska.*

They realized the two essential conditions for giving complete expression to their creative power. Apart from these types of great musicians, Polinski admits two others, namely, where a great talent exists in conjunction with a lesser genius, such as Meyerbeer, and where a great genius lacks talent. Moniuszko, according to Polinski, belongs to the latter category of composers, and this is perhaps the reason that he is little known outside his own country. In his music Moniuszko paid too little attention to details, unimportant perhaps in themselves, but necessary to bring his genius into proper relief.

Although Moniuszko was not the originator of the opera in Poland, it is he who first created the National Polish Opera. The inspiration of his music is found in the atmosphere of national life, and is placed in a Polish *milieu*.

The influence of contact with nature, attachment to poetry and national melodies, have exercised a profound influence on his soul, and consequently on his music. All this is reflected later in the rhythm, the harmonies, and in the plasticity of Moniuszko's music. All this explains the extraordinary enthusiasm with which the first opera was received in Poland, when it appeared in 1858 at Vilno. It was the peculiar province of Moniuszko to touch and vibrate the unseen and delicate tissue of which the soul of a nation is composed, which explains the unprecedented success which his opera "Halka" gained in Poland, in spite of its technical and other imperfections. Polish critics agreed that

the dependence of his genius on national elements was so strong, that every time he tried to give a more cosmopolitan and less national character to his music it was useless. His music lost in interest and value.

The limits of this study would have to be extended in order to do justice to all the Polish musicians, composers or artists, whose names belong to the history of modern and contemporary music in Poland. The names of Zelenski, Noskowski, Katski, Wieniawski, Paderewski, Mlynarski, Szymański, Rózycki, Karlowicz, Stojowski, Statkowski, Opienski and others come quite naturally and instantaneously to the minds of the lovers of music.

Paderewski, like Chopin, possesses extraordinary lightness and exquisite delicacy of touch; he is certainly the great representative of Polish music abroad. His originality as a pianist virtuoso is beyond compare.

The musical genius of Poland which first established itself with so much force in religious music, which produced the Polish opera, and which has given to the world Chopin and Moniuszko, will not be lacking in many brilliant manifestations in the future. May external conditions, in the front rank of which stands peace and the realization of national independence, be favourable to its development in the years to be!

# **INTELLECTUAL POLAND**

**A LECTURE DELIVERED AT CAMBRIDGE  
ON MAY 19, 1916**

**BY  
LEON LITWINSKI**

**With a Preface by  
The Rt. Hon. VISCOUNT BRYCE, O.M.**



## PREFACE

BY VISCOUNT BRYCE, O.M.

THE fortunes of the Polish people have long engaged the sympathetic interest of the peoples of Britain and France. We have always deplored that First Partition of Poland which was prompted by the unscrupulous ambition of Frederick II of Prussia. We grieve over the subsequent calamities of a gifted and gallant race, many of whose leaders had found a refuge among us. Within the last few years our interest has been rekindled by hope, for the prospect is brighter to-day than it has been for three generations, and we now look forward both to her recovering a united life under institutions calculated to meet her long-cherished aspirations, and to a permanent reconciliation of the Poles with other great branches of the Slavonic stock from which a series of unfortunate events have divided them in feeling. It is natural and proper that we in England should desire to be better informed regarding the history of the Polish People, and especially regarding their intellectual achievements. We know how much they have accomplished in poetry and music, as well as in science and letters. The

names of Copernicus and Mickiewicz and Chopin are those most familiar to us out of a long and brilliant list. But we need to know much else, and to have a far more complete picture presented of the whole history of the national mind and of its varied efforts in the field of creative literature. It is a history which is all the more interesting because it enables those who apply philosophical methods to history to appreciate the relative importance and the peculiar character of the two external factors which have borne their part in the development of thought and art among the Slavonic peoples; I mean the influence of the Latin and Teutonic West upon the Poles and the Czechs, and the influence upon the Russian races of the East Roman and Hellenic culture of the Ægean countries. We friends of Poland are glad, therefore, to see this book and the series of which it forms a part, brought before the English public, and I cannot doubt that it will not only be welcomed by scholars, but will also find a large circle of readers among those who have honoured the memory of Polish heroes of the older time, from John Sobieski down to Kosciuszko, and who have admired the tenacity with which the nation has clung to its ancient traditions and has preserved its ancient love of liberty.

# INTELLECTUAL POLAND

## I

### THE CONDITIONS OF INTELLECTUAL LIFE IN POLAND

No one would readily deny that the intellectual life,<sup>1</sup> like all other forms of life, must be considered as affected by the particular conditions of its existence and development. Unfortunately, however, it is not very easy for the free citizens of these islands to realize the conditions which determine the expression of thought in fettered Poland. Just let us imagine for a moment three different enemies dividing up Great Britain amongst them, and let us further suppose that the centres of her intellectual life, such as Oxford, Cambridge, London, Edinburgh—to which in Poland correspond Cracow,<sup>2</sup> Lemberg,<sup>3</sup> and Vilno<sup>4</sup>—are isolated to such an extent that the establishment of any

<sup>1</sup> The term “intellectual” is used here chiefly with reference to the capacity for the higher forms of conceptual thought. The Intellect is often opposed to other fundamental functions of the human soul, namely, to the Will and the Feeling.

<sup>2</sup> In Polish Kraków. <sup>3</sup> In Polish Lwów. <sup>4</sup> In Polish Wilno.

free intercourse between London and Oxford, for example, becomes infinitely more difficult than to have dealings with Indians or the Senegalese. Add to these suppositions the further enormity that two of these enemies, not satisfied with seeing their victim living an abnormal existence in each of the three parts of a single body, make a crowning effort to destroy the intellectual life at the very source of its being, by attacking one of the most marvellous instruments of mental production, which is called national individuality. They refuse to it those fundamental rights which are conducive to the development of the human personality, such as the right to personal freedom, the right of freedom of discussion and the liberty of the press, the right of public meeting, etc. All methods that contribute to this malevolent end will be considered fair in the estimation of these hostile Powers. They allow themselves such licence in the prosecution of their purposes that they pillage museums, burn and carry off libraries and national collections, and even appropriate scientific instruments, including the fittings of an astronomical observatory. Imagine, lastly, that the intellectual exponents of the comity of nations—i.e. the international congresses, which are generally regarded as representative of human dignity and the idea of progress, and as opposed to plunderers and the forces of reaction—imagine that these very intellectual exponents, so far from protesting against these incredible enormities, prefer the complicity which is undoubtedly associated with

a refusal to allow the delegates of the tortured country to take a part in their debates as a separate and distinct nation.

Sad to say, this is no imaginary portrait. It is only too true. The country on which Europe has imposed the conditions just described is Poland.

Truly there is need here of the pen of a literary artist rather than that of a scholar, to paint the terrible and affecting picture of the conditions in which Polish thought must perforce move, not to advance, but merely to keep itself alive—to protect itself against the sentence of systematic and merciless extermination passed upon it by the enemies of Poland more than a century ago.

This is why any one wishing to give foreigners some idea of the intellectual life of Poland must always appear first of all in the character of an accuser, and draw up a long indictment, too long, certainly, to form the subject of this publication. We shall therefore confine ourselves to quoting here a few facts in illustration of our statement.

*Intercourse between Poles and the Repressions of the Partitioning Powers.*—By a law of 1906, freedom of association was granted to the Russian Empire, including the Kingdom of Poland. Three months after the new law was proclaimed there was founded in Warsaw the Society *Macierz* ("Mother of Schools"). An announcement of its

fall will be found in the following telegram, which appeared in *The Times* of December 19, 1907:—

. . . According to the *Russ*, the "Macierz" during its two years of existence has formed 781 committees, enlisted 120,000 members, including all classes of the population, has applied for permission for 1,247 schools, of which 651 have been authorized, has educated 36,000 children, and has this year received subscriptions aggregating 1,000,000 roubles (£100,000). An assembly of delegates of the local committees was held recently in Warsaw. The "Macierz" was fined 3,000 roubles (£300) by the Governor-General on the complaint of the German Consul that three Poles from Posen attended the meeting. Four days later the "Macierz" was closed. . . .

It ought not to be inferred that the "Macierz" was closed because the German Consul complained. There were other causes as well. The fact shows only that intercourse between the Poles on questions of their public life and interests is severely repressed by mutual understanding of the partitioning Governments.

*Removal of Polish Libraries by Russia and Prussia.*—By way of opening the subject of the libraries of the capital of Russia, M. Eugene Morel, the author of the famous work "Bibliothèques," begins thus: "Saint-Pétersbourg a des richesses uniques, il a même toute la Pologne." There is a great truth in these words, for if Russia does not in reality possess all Polish territories, at least half the books collected by Poles during the eighteenth and the first part of the nineteenth century have

been carried away to Russia. If it is true that collections of books and works of art of conquered nations are confiscated and removed, we must confess at the same time that this mode of procedure has never been more generally applied than in respect to Poland, and never more systematically carried out than in the conquest of Poland by Russia. It was begun in 1772, by the transportation to St. Petersburg of the private collection of books belonging to the princely house of Radziwill. But it was the removal of the Zaluski Public Library, opened in Warsaw in 1747, which was the most terrible loss to Poland. This library was founded by Joseph Andre Zaluski, Bishop of Kieff. At the time of opening it contained nearly 200,000 volumes. By 1774 the number of books in the library was brought up to 400,000 volumes. This library was therefore at that time the largest in Europe.<sup>1</sup>

After the occupation of Warsaw by the Russian General Souvoroff, the Zaluski Library, which was under the administration of the Commission of Education (a Polish institution which was the first Board of Education in Europe), was removed in 1795 to St. Petersburg, where it became the nucleus of the present Imperial Public Library, which was then founded. According to Russian authorities, the

<sup>1</sup> According to A. Franklin, "Guide dans les Bibliothèques de Paris" (1908), amongst the libraries of Paris the "Nationale" contained in 1722, 98,000 vols.; in 1790, 153,000 vols.; in 1795, 475,000 vols.; that of Ste. Geneviève in 1716, 45,000 vols.; in 1791, 58,000 vols.

collection which reached St. Petersburg numbered only 262,000 volumes, 120,000 pamphlets, 11,000 manuscripts, and 24,000 engravings. The remainder must have been lost through the haste with which the library was removed, and only a portion could be saved by some bibliophiles who managed to bribe the Cossacks escorting the convoy.<sup>1</sup>

The struggle between Russia and Poland in 1831 served as a new opportunity for the transportation of the Polish libraries in a body to the shores of the Neva. Warsaw alone then contributed more than 170,000 volumes to the Imperial Public Library. At the same time the library of the Czartoryski princes at Pulawy, containing 40,000 very choice books, was also added to the collections of the Imperial Public Library at St. Petersburg. The collections of the Plock Academy, numbering nearly 42,000 volumes, were divided between St. Petersburg and Moscow. In addition, the Library of the Cadet Corps at Kalisz and that of the Princes Sapieha at Doroczyn followed the same road northward.

The end was not yet reached. In 1866, after the

<sup>1</sup> See Olenine, Director of the St. Petersburg Imperial Library, "Essay on the New Bibliographic Order."

The Abbé Georgel, secretary of the French Embassy in Vienna, in his "Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire des événements de la fin du 18me siècle," describes the manner in which the packing up of the library was effected "by a horde of Cossacks." Among other incidents he tells how a beautiful book of engravings was cut in half by the Cossacks because it was too large for the box.

monasteries were finally abolished in the Kingdom of Poland, the Government entered into possession of their libraries, dispatching a great number of their books to St. Petersburg.

A part of the private library of King Stanislas Augustus Poniatowski found safe quarters at Astrachan, where it belongs at present to the local Orthodox Church seminary.

At the commencement of the present war seventy chests containing valuable prints were carried away from the library of the Warsaw University to Moscow, thus depriving this library of what escaped from danger even in 1831.

The Prussian Government proceeded along the same lines, by removing to Berlin between 1835 and 1839 the libraries of the monasteries of the Grand Duchy of Posen.

*The Fate of Prince Jablonowski's Scientific Endowment.*—But the most scandalous example of German hostility towards the development of Polish thought may be found in the case of Prince Joseph A. Jablonowski's Scientific Endowment.<sup>1</sup> Prince Joseph, a Polish magnate, gave in 1768 a donation in cash with a view to encouraging Polish science and Polish scientists. This donation was accepted by the University of Leipzig. In 1774 it received the royal

<sup>1</sup> A. Kraushar, "W sprawie fundacji naukowej J. A. Jabłonowskiego," 1911.

sanction of Frederick Augustus,<sup>1</sup> with special guarantees that the will of the donor should be held sacred. To-day the endowment still exists, but the University of Leipzig has entirely changed its application. It no longer serves for the encouragement of Polish science. Poles are deliberately excluded from its management. The essays must be presented exclusively in German. Such action would normally come under Sect. 87 of the German Code of August 18, 1896. Unfortunately, there is no chance that the law will be applied in this case.

*International Congress of Neurologists, Alienists, and Psychologists, and the Poles.*—A fortnight before the War broke out the well-known Polish physician Professor Henryk Halban of Lemberg sent to the Press the following decision:—

In the name of and in concert with my colleagues who formed part of the Select Committee of the International Congress of Neurologists, Alienists, and Psychologists at Berne (Warsaw : represented by Messrs. Flatau, Radziwillowicz, Weryho ; Posen : Szuman ; Cracow : Heinrich, Piltz, Wachholz, Zanistowski ; Lemberg : Twardowski, Sieradzki, Halban), I beg to inform the societies and institutions interested in that Conference that we have unanimously resolved : (1) not to take part in the Conference, and (2) to request the striking out of our names from the list of the Organizing Committee. At the same time we beg of all our colleagues who intended to take part in the Conference not to come to Berne. We arrived

---

<sup>1</sup> "Fundatio perpetua præmiorum viris doctis quotannis distribuendorum" (König. Saechs. Hauptstaatsarchiv Originalurkunde, No. 10538).

at these resolutions in consequence of the fact that the Central Committee at Berne, which at the beginning proposed to us of its own accord a separate Polish Committee, later on, at the request put forward by German medical societies, without any agreement with us, set aside the Polish Committee and included its members in the particular committees of the countries which have partitioned Poland. Further particulars concerning our correspondence with the Central Committee at Berne will be brought to public notice at a very early date.

LEMBERG,  
12th July, 1914.

Are we to conclude from instances like the one just cited that to the mind of twentieth-century members of international congresses the prospect of a banquet honoured by the presence of a high official in the person of a Minister or an Ambassador is more valuable than the humiliation of Poland?

*M. Delcassé and M. Henryk Sienkiewicz.*—But Europe refuses to recognize, not only the individuality of the science of Poland, but also that of her literature. Some years ago M. Delcassé, Minister of Foreign Affairs for France, wrote a letter to Henryk Sienkiewicz, in which he announced that the French Government had decided to confer a distinction on that eminent “Russian author” by naming him in the Legion of Honour. It was only when Henryk Sienkiewicz had expressed his great astonishment that the militant French Radical should consider him a “Russian” author, that M. Delcassé agreed to correct this error. For the Poles

it was almost a victory—a good reason for placing in the French Radicals their hopes of a brighter future !

*Byron, John Stuart Mill, and the Warsaw Censor.*—Finally, as another illustration of the conditions under which Polish intellectual life has to struggle for its existence it may be mentioned that among the books prohibited by the Warsaw censor were those of such authors as Byron and John Stuart Mill !

After all these examples it will be easier to understand the meaning of the following words written by Boleslawicki :—

The opposition between inward feelings and outward conditions, between the burning faith of the heart and the crushing tyranny of the commonplace day, has reached with us a state of tragic tension, upsetting the balance of delicate natures.

Why should the spirit of politics and diplomacy get the upper hand of the spirit of justice ? Why should the noble inspirations and persevering efforts of good and honest men be wasted in the struggle with baseness ? The Polish nation has been deprived of the conditions indispensable for the expression of its intuitions, capabilities, and powers.<sup>1</sup>

A Polish publicist, speaking recently of the unusual conditions under which Polish national life has to develop, said :—

We have been born, we are living and acting, so to speak, in the crater of a volcano which ever threatens us with an

---

<sup>1</sup> Boleslawicki, "Kwestja Polska" (1899).

irruption, and which now and then throws out streams of fire and molten lava. We have never enjoyed, like other countries, the happiness of work conducted under the protection of a lasting peace. We are accustomed to see around us graves and ruins. Unlike many other countries, we erect our institutions and perform our tasks with the conviction that they will sooner or later be swept away by our enemies, and that we shall be obliged to rebuild them or to perform them over and over again.

This work may be compared with that of an ant persistently repairing an ant-hill whilst her cruel and unscrupulous pillagers are destroying all the results of her toil.

The Polish citizen needs a great deal of adaptability to keep his footing in the forefront of civilization while his enemies are continually trying to take away the solid foundation on which he rests, and which he needs in order to make his work secure.

## II

### THE VITALITY OF POLISH INTELLECTUAL PROPENSITIES

TAKING into account the extraordinary conditions dealt with above, one may well ask if it is to be expected that any room can be found in Poland for the development of intellectual life generally. In this Poland, where intellect is in itself an object of suspicion—as is acknowledged by a French writer—where societies whose aims are as far as possible removed from the realm of politics have yet the utmost difficulty in obtaining permission to exist, or are dissolved, as was, some years ago, the Society of medical men at Warsaw; where the best energies of the nation are squandered in an unequal struggle with restraint and force; where the most distinguished intellects often perish on the scaffold, in damp prisons, or in limitless Siberia; where affirmation of national individuality is the object of brutal persecution; where everything has to develop without any encouragement from the State; where, in short, all must depend on the initiative of individuals and on personal sacrifices; where the very foundations of national existence are in danger—under conditions such as these it

would be, surely, a great thing to show even that the creative genius of the Polish nation is not atrophied, and that Poland has succeeded in preserving her spiritual integrity, her native language, her artistic and literary taste, in short, her "spiritual faculties," in potential form—or, if you will, the internal conditions conducive to intellectual literary and artistic activity. If it can be shown that this is the case, the Poles will already have given to the civilized world proof of the extraordinary vitality of their national spirit.

Now, this proof the Poles have given in the past, and are constantly giving, arousing in their enemies an irreconcilable fury. History shows clearly that every time exterior conditions have been favourable to the expression of these "potential faculties" they have never failed to manifest themselves. It has been so in Poland under all the three régimes, Prussian, Russian, and Austrian.

*Intellectual Life in German Poland about 1845 and after 1870.*—After the year 1840, Posen, as Professor Struve has said, put herself at the head of the Polish intellectual movement, thanks to the greater liberty she enjoyed in comparison with the other two parts of divided Poland. The result was that many Polish scholars from Russian Poland established themselves there, either temporarily or permanently.

About this period (1843-5) Posen became in some measure the intellectual capital of the whole of Poland. There were to be found there Kamienski, Jarochowski, Kosinski, Mielzynski, Bentowski, Libelt, Moraczewski, Cieszkowski, Trentowski, Kremer, Dembowski, and many others.

Later on the Prussian policy with regard to Poland underwent a change, and was directed towards a merciless and brutal persecution of the Polish element, so that in 1905 the same Professor Struve stated, at the International Philosophical Congress, held at Geneva, that the conditions imposed on Polish scientific societies and institutions in Posen were so severe that it was not at all astonishing if there was then talk of a real "emigration" of Polish scholars from Posen to Cracow and Lemberg.

A similar statement might be made of that part of Poland which had fallen under the dominion of Russia.

*Reformed Vilno University, 1781-1831.*—At the beginning of the nineteenth century the Polish provinces under Russian rule had two chief centres of intellectual culture, Warsaw and Vilno.<sup>1</sup> So far as the second of these is concerned, the intellectual movement there gravitated round the Vilno University, founded in 1579 by Stefan Batory, King of Poland. Although in its far distant past Vilno

<sup>1</sup> To which might also be added Pulawy.

University could pride itself upon names like Skarga, Warszewicki or Sarbiewski, whose muse Grotius justly compared with that of Horace, it must be admitted that its rapid progress dates chiefly from the reforms of 1781 and 1803.

Alexander I, Emperor of Russia, proclaimed in a statute dated April, 1803 :—

We secure for ever the future of the ancient University of Vilno, founded in 1578 and reorganized in 1781 according to the scientific standards of the most advanced countries of Europe.

Twenty-nine years after, i.e. in 1831, this reformed shrine of Polish intellectual life, raised by men with brilliant intellectual powers and exceptional capacity for organization, like Czartoryski, Czacki, Sniadecki, and others, was suppressed. Short as was the existence of the new Vilno University, yet its achievements were magnificent. It is acknowledged that in the last decades of its existence the torch of this University burned with a flame so living and resplendent that it lit up, not only Lithuania but also the whole Kingdom of Poland. In the history of the intellectual life of Poland it will be the eternal glory of this University that from its midst came men like Mickiewicz, Slowacki, Kraszewski, Chodzko, Korsak, Odyniec, and others.

*Warsaw "Szkola Główna"* (1862-9).—The history of the seven years of existence (1862-9) of the Warsaw "Szkola Główna" (Chief School) affords

another striking piece of evidence of the reality of our contention that the inward propensities towards the intellectual life, as well as literary and artistic interest, have never died in the Polish soul. They have only been held back by unfavourable outward conditions, the influence of which was not the same, it must be pointed out, with regard to the intellectual life of Poland as with regard to its literary and artistic life.

The year 1831 was the beginning in Poland of a period of arrested development in every branch of her national life. The intellectual element in the country was in part banished and in part paralysed by Draconian measures. As a result there was a great danger of mental apathy in the community. It was absolutely necessary to escape from this condition of things, which was threatening the country with a retrograde movement. It was necessary to find some means for reawakening the natural aptitude for the cult of the sciences, an aptitude which was almost asleep, and, so to speak, frozen.

This rôle was exactly filled by the creation in 1862 of the "Szkola Główna"—that is to say, by the revival of the Polish University of Warsaw, which was again closed in its turn in 1869, not identically the same, it is true, but still a revival.

The task undertaken by the "Szkola Główna" consisted, as M. Dickstein, a distinguished Polish mathematician, has explained,<sup>1</sup> of creating the largest

<sup>1</sup> "Ksiega pamiątkowa b. wychowanców b. Szkoly Głównej" (1905).

possible number of Chairs and filling them with the best scientific forces ; establishing contact with the research work of the West ; creating a favourable atmosphere for the scientists and students of the future.

It was necessary, therefore, to fill up the gaps in the general education of the people caused by long years of stagnation ; to render higher education more accessible to the young ; to show them the important problems that await them in future ; to prepare useful citizens for the country, capable of occupying responsible posts, demanding University training. In spite of adverse circumstances the "Szkola Główna" discharged its duties for seven years.

After a few years important scientific works written by former students of the "Szkola Główna" began to appear in the Memoirs of the Association of Exact Science in Paris, and in the Transactions of the Academy of Sciences in Cracow. From amidst these pupils there had grown a generation which for the last forty years has been uninterruptedly working on the scientific and social fields in Poland. But only a handful of them were in a position to devote themselves to purely scientific work or to fill University Chairs.

It is known that the "Szkola Główna" produced a large number of men of great, if not exceptional, value (Sienkiewicz, Prus, Swietochowski, Chmielowski, Dygasiński, Rembowski, Badouin de Courtenay, Dunin, Kraushar, Gloger, etc) ; that amongst

them appeared magnificent talents and critical minds ; that they created one of the most beautiful periods of our literature ; that they brought about a powerful intellectual movement whose waves and currents flow through our life even to-day. All this could not have been a matter of accident, but was much more owing to the merit of the School.

The School freed new forces of the nation, which would otherwise have withered away and perished ; it succeeded in utilizing the great passion for learning in the young, and the inclination to education in the older ; it created a scientific atmosphere for the Polish intellectual classes ; it gave free play to Polish thought ; it welded heterogeneous elements of the nation in the fire of comradeship ; it prepared the soil for the new seed of democracy ; and it restored, or at least helped to restore, the spiritual balance of the people, which was disturbed by a one-sided artistic development, by transferring the excess of energy from the heart to the brain.

A most astonishing fact is that this was accomplished during barely seven years, not only through the scientific knowledge of the teachers of the School, but also, as has been pointed out by M. A. Swietochowski, through its national character : the School was Polish throughout.

Students listening to lectures delivered in their native tongue [says M. Swietochowski] are not hampered by various psychic factors obstructing the free association of thoughts and cooling rather than stimulating their interest in work.

The collective soul of every nation is a distinct prism in

itself, in which the rays of knowledge break in a specific manner, different from other prisms. It can also be compared to an individual organism which can feed itself successfully only according to its own nature. The national School offers its people suitable food in the best form for assimilation and for maintenance of health and vigour.

All this was done by the "Szkola Główna." To say this is not a patriotic sophism, but a conclusion based on experience, because whenever we had the chance of having a Polish University its strong influence was immediately and distinctly reflected in the development of the nation's culture. We know the salutary influence of the Universities of Warsaw and Vilno, we know what powerful light they cast on the country, and what deep darkness fell upon her the moment these institutions were closed.<sup>1</sup>

In place of this wholesome institution, which provided for the needs of the intellectual development of the country, there was established in 1869 its exact opposite—a University whose aim was, in the words of Professor Askenazy, "to serve as an auxiliary instrument, among many others, with a view to the policy of unification, in conformity with the idea of the State as a means of levelling everything and everybody, as well as to act as a purely bureaucratic machine created for the purpose of distributing University diplomas."<sup>2</sup> The Polish language was banished from this new University, together with Polish professors and scholars. From the standpoint of scientific movement, it played no part whatever either in Poland or in Russia, and its professorial staff was destitute of scientific authorities.

<sup>1</sup> "Ksiega Szkoly Głównej," p. 23.

<sup>2</sup> S. Askenazy, Univ. Warszawski, 1905.

Further, some of its professors set themselves to create in the minds of their pupils a real feeling of distaste for the institutions and ideas of Western Europe. France, for instance, was represented to them as a decadent country, in process of falling to pieces. It is not astonishing, therefore, that the result of all this has been disastrous as regards Poland, and entirely negative as regards Russia. The numbers of the attendance at this University have fallen 210 per cent. as compared with those of the university it replaced.

Austrian Poland, which occupies a very inferior economic and cultural position, and where half the population is made up of Ruthenians, much less suited to a University education, has nevertheless an attendance of students several times greater than is found in the Kingdom of Poland. In 1905, in Galicia there were 5,000 students out of 7,500,000 inhabitants, while in Russian Poland, out of 11,000,000 inhabitants only 1,500 were students. The fact that Russian and Prussian Poland have no Polish University has sent a large number of students to the Universities of France, Belgium, Switzerland, Germany, etc.

It will be superfluous to try to show that the constitutional and liberal régime enjoyed by the Poles in Galicia has had a highly favourable effect on the development of Polish intellectual life in that part of Poland.

*Revival of the Polish University at Warsaw in 1915.*—Lastly, as a concluding proof that the Poles have been able to preserve potentially their natural capabilities, and that the whole policy of Russification or Germanization has succeeded only in retarding its development, there may be adduced the fact of the creation of the University of Warsaw after the fall of that city.

The *Warsaw Courier* (November 1915) describes at some length the extraordinary difficulties which had to be overcome by the Education Department of the Citizens' Committee of Warsaw, in order to create in that city a Polish University and a Polish Technical High School. Having obtained the permission of the authorities, the said department achieved its aim in the course of a few weeks, in spite of interrupted communication with the provinces, where there is to be found a not inconsiderable number of Polish scientists and professors, in spite of the devastation of the country, threatened by poverty and hunger, and in spite of the fact that the original Polish University of Warsaw had been closed for fifty years.

The above-mentioned paper pays a high tribute to this remarkable and unusual manifestation of the energy and organizing talent of the Poles, and adds : "History will some day do justice to this city, which, being able to offer neither money nor facilities to Polish science, has yet always possessed a certain number of men devoted to science with disinterestedness and endurance, who have fulfilled their duty.

towards civilization and country without any brighter prospects, and often under most trying financial conditions."

*Production of Books in Poland.*—Perhaps a few statistical data showing the number and the distribution of Polish books published in 1911 will be of interest in considering the reality of Polish literary and scientific propensities.

According to the Swiss periodical *Droit d'Auteur*, the following was the production of books in 1911: France, 11,652; Great Britain, 10,914; Holland, 3,673; Poland, 3,462; Spain, 2,790; Hungary, 2,032.

The following is a classification of Polish books, according to their subject-matter (1910):—

Bibliography, 63	Geography and Travels, 39
Philosophy and Psychology, 66	Novels, 267
Mathematics and Natural Sciences, 141	Poetry, 122
Anthropology, 13	Art, 51
History, 135	Music, 114
Medicine, 100	Drama, 82
Law, Economics, and Sociology, 98	Pedagogy, 70
Ethnology and Ethnography, 9	Textbooks for Schools, 117
History of Literature, 164	Books for Children, 173
Comparative Study of Languages, 15	Theology, 370
Technology, 42	Popular Literature, 262
Trade and Commerce, 22	Sensational Literature, 57
Agriculture, 84	Books of Songs, etc., 81 <sup>1</sup>
	Miscellaneous, 322
	Almanacks, 147
	Reports, etc., 200

The above examples prove that it is true to say that the Poles have been able to preserve all those civilizing propensities which from mediæval days down to the present time have distinguished Polish national life. And this in spite of the unequal struggle, in spite of the violence of the means employed by the partitioning Powers—a violence which oftentimes nothing but the limitations of the human imagination could check. The Powers in question have succeeded merely in hindering the normal development of these propensities, in creating for them conditions entirely out of harmony with the past history of the intellectual life of Poland.

*Intellectual Life in Poland in the Past.*—Before the loss of their political independence, the Poles possessed five Universities, and were considering the foundation of two more—in Posen and in Wolhynia. At the beginning of this War they possessed only two. The Polish University of Cracow, founded in 1364—that is to say, at an earlier date than the foundation of the first German University—quickly became the rendezvous of young students who came in streams from all the countries of Europe, even from those which already possessed their own Universities, to attend the lectures of celebrated professors such as the astronomer Wojciech (better known as Adalbert), the teacher of the immortal Copernicus. Thus

in the period 1433-1509 nearly half the students of the Cracow University were foreigners. But now, in our own time, the young students of Russian and Prussian Poland, as well as numbers of scholars, are obliged to migrate to foreign countries, such as France, Switzerland, Belgium, Germany, and others, to seek the light they cannot find in their own land or are forbidden to kindle there.

Frankly, such a state of things is not deserved by the Poland which in the past has given to the civilized world sufficient proofs of its capacity to contribute to the development of intellectual life and civilization in general.

The Cracow University, which educated Copernicus, had as early as 1416, says the "Encyclopædia Britannica," "so far acquired a European reputation as to venture upon forwarding an expression of its views in connection with the deliberations of the Council of Constance, and towards the close of the fifteenth century the Cracow University was in high repute as a school of both astronomical and humanistic studies."<sup>1</sup>

Leonard Cox, an Englishman and a former student of Cracow University, in his *De Laudibus Academiæ Cracoviensis*, published in 1518, gave expression to his intense admiration of the Polish scholastic dialectic, and it was Erasmus of Rotterdam himself who, in 1529, dedicated his edition of the works of Seneca to the Bishop of Cracow, as to a centre of learning of European reputation.

<sup>1</sup> "Encyc. Brit.," 1911, vol. xxvii. p. 757.

Although in the subsequent period of Polish thought there was a decline, the Poles have always preserved their interest in the intellectual life, public instruction, methods of teaching, etc. Poland, therefore, as was stated a few months ago by M. Siedlecki in the Warsaw weekly paper *Tygodnik Ilustrowany*, came up to the requirements and the high standard of University life as far back as the fifteenth century, and since that time she has not once deviated from her spiritual course. There has been no period in her historic past when the loss of a centre of higher education has not been painfully felt by the nation. What the Poles are apt to call the epoch of decline in Poland, namely the seventeenth century, witnessed not only the formation of higher educational institutions in Poland proper, but also in Lithuania and the distant provinces of the realm. The banner of higher education was hoisted over the northern town of Polock, bringing with it the torch of Western European intellectual light. In the same century we find another example of Polish educational initiative in the formation of the Academy of Kieff, so that at a time which, with scrupulous self-criticism, the Poles term the period of decay, Polish science had still so much elasticity, so much excess of energy, that it was able to undertake intellectual missions outside the ethnographic boundaries of the Polish Commonwealth.

### III

## THE ORGANIZATION OF POLISH INTELLECTUAL LIFE

IF fettered Poland has been able to preserve and even to develop what we have called her "potential faculties," this has been made possible only by the enormous sacrifices she has always been ready to make for the retention at any cost of her individuality. Of this an eloquent example is to be found in the institutions connected with the intellectual life of Poland. These are the incarnation of the spirit at once of sacrifice, of self-defence, and of organization.

*Polish Scientific Institutions and Societies.*—After Poland lost her independence, the necessity of maintaining and developing science and arts called into being a number of new societies as far as the partitioning Powers would permit. One of the most important of these is the Ossolinski National Institute and Public Library in Lemberg. It was founded by Count Joseph Maximilian Ossolinski in 1817. In 1823 the Lubomirski Museum was added to it. This Institute has gradually become one of the leading scientific institutions in Poland,

although before the year 1860 its development was greatly hindered by the repressive measures of the Austrian Government. Even the adjective "national" in the name of the Institute was regarded as an offence by the Government, which persistently tried to change it to "scientific." In spite of these difficulties "Ossolineum," as it is commonly called, has flourished, and possesses over £32,000 of capital, as well as a large building in Lemberg and its own printing works, library, and museum.

In Posen, the Society for Promoting Science, founded by Karol Marcinkowski in 1841, has rendered great services to the cause of Polish intellectual life. This prosperous Society has endowment funds amounting to £52,000.

There are two institutions in Poland whose special object is helping the cause of research. The first is the Mianowski Loan Fund, established in Warsaw in 1881 by Dr. Joseph Mianowski, and the second is the Society for Promotion of Polish Science, founded in Lemberg in 1901.

Among the most visible signs of the activity of the Mianowski Fund are the publications which it has helped to issue. Its catalogue contains over 620 titles of works in all departments of knowledge. Besides separate books this institution helps to publish series of important works.

The Lemberg Society for Promoting Polish Science was founded twenty years later than the Mianowski Loan Fund, and cannot therefore boast

of an equally splendid record ; nevertheless, considering its comparatively slender resources, it has given proofs of great vitality and efficiency. During the second year of its existence its membership increased by 1,015. The aim of the Society is "to help Polish scientists or institutions which devote themselves to the cause of research in any branch of knowledge" ; this aim has been achieved chiefly by helping such persons or institutions to publish the results of their inquiries. So far 49 books have been published, on the following subjects : Polish Law, History, History of Literature, Art, Science, and Psychology. Besides these works the Society issues the following publications : "The Archivum of Knowledge"—divided into two sections : the historical-philosophical (6 volumes) and the mathematical-scientific—and "Studies in the History of Polish Law." In order to enable foreign scholars to become acquainted with the results of the Society's researches it issues a "Bulletin" in French (12 volumes up till now).

These few societies do not exhaust all the activities of the Polish community in support of art and science. Many smaller associations and institutions exist, and some of them have rendered valuable services to the cause of Polish intellectual life. Such are, for instance :—

Circle of the Polish Mathematicians at Warsaw (Kolo matematyczne w Warszawie).

Warsaw Psychological Association (Tow. psychologiczne w Warszawie).

- Lemberg Pedagogical Society (Tow. pedagogiczne we Lwowie).
- Polish Philosophical Association at Lemberg (Polskie tow. filozoficzne we Lwowie).
- Cracow Philosophical Society (Tow. filozoficzne w Krakowie).
- Lemberg Law Association (Tow. prawnicze lwowskie).
- Warsaw Law Association (Tow. prawnicze warszawskie).
- Cracow Law and Economic Association (Tow. prawnicze i ekonomiczne w Krakowie).
- Lemberg Historical Society (Tow. historyczne we Lwowie).
- Cracow Historical Society (Tow. historyczne w Krakowie).
- Warsaw Historical Society (Tow. milosników historji w Warszawie).
- Cracow Numismatic Society (Tow. numizmatyczne w Krakowie).
- Lemberg Folk-lore Society (Tow. ludoznawcze we Lwowie).
- Lemberg Mickiewicz Literary Society (Tow. literackie im. Mickiewicza we Lwowie), etc.

The interest taken in all scientific societies by the Polish community is very noteworthy. The best proofs of this are the great number of members and the rapid spread and development of such societies ; the latter fact also proves how very much desired they were. A few years were sufficient for the Warsaw Scientific Society to become a very influential institution.

Unfortunately, the Polish scientific societies and institutions depend for their monetary resources solely on voluntary subscriptions. Thus, for instance, a few years ago a generous patroness presented the Public Library in Warsaw with a fine building, the cost of the erection of which represented over £40,000. The donations received by the Cracow Academy, the Warsaw Scientific Society, and the

Vilno Society afford another convincing proof of the great generosity of the public in Poland. Thus, as soon as the Vilno Society of Friends of Learning received a few years ago a legal status, gifts began to pour in from all over Lithuania; collections of books, archives, and many other gifts were sent, regardless of the fact that many times previously such collections have after a time been taken away to Russia by the Government.

*Central Institutions of Intellectual Life in Poland.*

—All the above institutions have been created as being essential to the promotion of the development of the intellectual life of the country. There are other institutions which occupy a more central position and which exercise a more controlling or directing influence.

At the head of Polish scientific institutions is the Cracow Academy, originally called the Cracow Scientific Society. It was inaugurated in February 1816 by the Rector of Cracow University, Valentine Litwinski. The foundation of this institution is directly connected with Cracow University, which represents the embodiment of centuries of Polish intellectual tradition. According to the regulation of 1816, the rectors of Cracow University had to perform at the same time the functions of the President of the Cracow Scientific Society. After the closing, by order of the Russian Government, of the Society of the Friends of Learning in Warsaw, the

Cracow Scientific Society became the leading institution in the intellectual life of the whole of Poland. In 1873 it received new regulations and the title of "Academy." During the forty years from that date, acting under somewhat better political conditions, the Academy has done excellent work in every domain of knowledge. Its publications of important documents relating to Polish History, Literature and Law, Polish Bibliography, the History of Art in Poland, Archæology and Ethnography, are truly monumental works in no way inferior to the corresponding publications of other nations.

At present the Academy has commenced the publication of the "Polish Encyclopædia"; the contributors to this number several hundred and the volumes several score. There is a branch of the Academy in Paris, and for several years now a party of Polish scholars sent by the Academy to Rome has been conducting researches relating to the history of Poland. Similar parties have latterly visited Sweden and Hungary for the same purpose. An examination of the list of publications shows the wide scope of the Academy's activities.

As Lemberg did not wish to compete with the Cracow Academy, no large and comprehensive Society of a similar nature has been formed in Eastern Galicia, but in respect of the number of societies devoted to the furthering of special subjects this town is first in all Poland. In Warsaw, Posen, and Vilno the need for an institution which would

be representative of all that was best in the intellectual life of each part of the country, was also felt. There was a twofold reason for this: first, the difference in the conditions prevailing in the three parts of Poland—Russian, Prussian, and Austrian; and secondly, the fact that even the many and varied activities of the Academy, were not sufficient to meet the growing intellectual needs of the country. At the present time the centres of intellectual activity in Poland may be divided into five, namely: Cracow, which serves as such for the whole of Poland; Lemberg, for Galicia; Warsaw, for the Kingdom of Poland; Vilno, for Lithuania; and Posen, for the Duchy of Posen. Thorn may be added as a sixth centre, for it can boast of a smaller but very energetic Society.

After the suppression in 1833, by Russian Imperial order, of the Towarzystwo Naukowe Warszawskie (Warsaw Scientific Society) there was no central institution in Warsaw co-ordinating the scientific life of this part of Poland. It was only in 1907 that the revival of the above institution was allowed. The work of the Society is carried out in sections, which publish their *Transactions*. There are three sections: (1) Philology and Literature; (2) Anthropology, Social Sciences, History and Philosophy; (3) Mathematics and Natural Sciences. The Society possesses a certain number of laboratories for research in the departments of Physiology, Anthropology, Neuro-biology, Meteorology, Radiology, Zoology, etc.

In German Poland the Polish Scientific Movement is promoted as far as possible by the Towarzystwo Przyjaciol Nauk w Poznaniu (Society of Friends of Learning in Posen), founded in 1857. It issues an *Annual* (since its foundation) and *Medical News* (since 1889), as well as separate publications. It is also active in promoting scientific lectures, the care of ancient monuments, and the erection of statues to the distinguished dead.

The Society consists of five sections: (1) History and Literature (existing since 1857); (2) Natural Sciences (since 1857); (3) Medicine (since 1865); (4) Law and Economics (since 1908); and (5) Technology (since 1912).

The Society possesses a library consisting of 140,000 volumes, 800 manuscripts, as well as numerous collections, viz.: (1) Picture Gallery (about 800 pictures); (2) Prehistoric Archæological Collection; (3) Ethnographic Collection; (4) Numismatic Collection; (5) Natural History Collection; (6) Collection of Objects of National and Historical Interest.

As to Lithuania, it was only in 1906 that permission was granted to found Towarzystwo Przyjaciol Nauk w Wilnie (The Society of Friends of Learning in Vilno). This Society issues an annual publication as well as separate publications. The meetings take place once a month. The Society organizes lectures and devotes its energies to the preservation of national monuments and memorials. In 1911 its members numbered 400: 353 ordinary and 47

honorary, patrons, and life-members. The Society possesses a library as well as rich archives.

During 1913 the Society was amalgamated with Muzeum Nauki i Sztuki (The Vilno Art and Science Museum) and is therefore now in possession of the valuable collections of the Museum.

We must again emphasize the fact that, in order to estimate at its true worth the work done by Polish learned societies, it is necessary to realize the difficulties they have had to contend with. In Galicia, where the Government did not hinder their formation, they developed rapidly and accomplished a great deal of valuable work. In the Kingdom of Poland it was not until the year 1905, when the status of such societies was legalized, that the conditions became somewhat easier ; since then a great number of societies have arisen and flourished. It must be borne in mind that the continuity of their work had been completely broken, and that for over half a century there had been no room in Russia for Polish intellectual activity. This break lasted from 1831 till 1907 ; it was not till 1907 that the formation of the Warsaw Scientific Society was permitted. Vilno suffered the same fate ; its ancient University was closed and all societies abolished in 1831. The only Society which escaped was the Medical Society, but its privileges were gradually curtailed, and in 1874 it was forbidden to use the Polish language ; Russian was the language to be used at meetings and for documents, treatises, etc., but any of the members who did not know it were

allowed to speak French, German, or English; finally, the Society was completely taken over by the Russian Administration. The list of Polish societies which were abolished by the Government and those which existed without being authorized to exist would be very long. Although conditions were better before the war broke out, it may be said that every society which is flourishing and attracts large numbers of the intellectual classes is threatened with extinction by the Government.

It is almost superfluous to speak of the difficulties encountered in Prussian Poland.

The before-mentioned fact showing how the Leipsic University has misused certain funds which were given by a Polish magnate, Prince Jabłonowski, in 1774, is a very typical instance among many others.

## IV

### EPILOGUE

THE Poles are standing out for the acquisition of such conditions as will allow them to develop their living personality and to bring their tribute to the common treasure of mankind.

Apparently the fulfilment of these conditions does not require the right to an independent political self-determination, and if so, i.e. if the Poles do not claim what is sometimes called a radical solution of the Polish question, the present war may easily, it may be said, realize their aspirations. This ought to be the view especially of that part of Polish public opinion which comprises its intellectual classes, the mental attitude of which in all countries is generally characterized by a diminished enthusiasm for such things as the idea of a king, that of a national army, or that of outward strength or expansion.

This is perhaps true in the case of the countries which have never ceased to enjoy political independence, but it is certainly false in the case of a country which, like Poland, has lost this independence. The intellectual classes in Poland take

their stand firmly under the banner of political independence. For them, as for other sections of Polish society, freedom constitutes the indispensable condition of the development of Poland's individuality, which ought not to be confounded with "originality." The history of the last hundred years has shown to the Poles quite conclusively that there cannot be real and lasting freedom for Poland without political independence, without a Polish State and a Polish Army. The spirit of imperialism and expansion, the jealousy between nations, etc., will remain for a long time the main obstacle towards a mutual understanding between nations, especially in the case of inequality in their respective strengths. This is a fact which cannot be abolished by mere reasoning or speculation, like those, for instance, which are based on the distinction between "good-hearted" and "brutal" nations. The Poles have little to expect, either, from the future development of what is called "liberal" tendencies in politics. History shows that in the development of liberal and progressive political parties there occur very curious transformations as soon as they attain to power or even as soon as they realize that they are beginning to exercise a real influence on governmental authority.

What intellectual Poland wants is an intense, complete, peaceful, and uninterrupted national life. It is only in the restored Polish State that such a life can exist. Such an intense and peaceful life will certainly be favourable to the development

of those fundamental mental "faculties" which have been responsible for the development of Polish thought in the past, and which the Poles have been able to preserve in spite of unfavourable outward conditions.

Among these "faculties" a prominent place has been taken by creative imagination.

It is a well-known fact that different nations contribute not merely in different degrees but also in different ways towards the development of various high expressions of thought, feelings and will.<sup>1</sup> In this connection it is to be expected that psychologists will be able to demonstrate in the future that the Polish national genius is distinguished for the

<sup>1</sup> Herr Hans Delbrück, Professor in the University of Berlin and Deputy to the Reichstag, expressed this opinion some years ago : "The splendour and the intellectual wealth of our epoch, our progress in the sciences, in philosophy, in art, and in technical matters—in a word, the whole of civilization is based on the plurality of the great nations. Each has its own qualities, its own nature, its own development, and the labour and productions of each have an influence upon the others. The great minds of Germany could never have been what they were without Voltaire, Rousseau, Shakespeare, and neither the French nor the English could be what they are without Luther and the Reformation." Herbert Spencer and other sociologists affirm that the world passes from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous, everything acquires complexity and is subdivided. The division of labour carried to infinity conduces to the interdependence of countries and of individuals. This interdependence cannot be realized, as Fouillée emphasized, either by a narrow nationalism or by a half-understood internationalism which fails to recognize both the true nature and the true needs of national organisms.

power of its creative imagination and its peculiar mental freedom. From Copernicus down to M. Henryk Sienkiewicz this quality may be noticed. Professor Höffding, a well-known Danish philosopher and psychologist, writes on this point as follows :—

What is marvellous in scientific genius is the mental freedom with which it is able to abstract from experience and to picture the different possibilities with all their consequences, in order to find by this means a new reality, not accessible to direct experience. Kepler<sup>1</sup> cited this mental freedom as a significant feature in the genius of Copernicus.<sup>2</sup>

It is also this rare freedom and power of imagination which strikes one most in reading certain of M. Henryk Sienkiewicz's works.

Simon Newcomb said about Copernicus :—

There is no figure in astronomical history which may more appropriately claim the admiration of mankind through all time than that of Copernicus. Scarcely any great work was ever so exclusively the work of one man as was the heliocentric system, the work of the retiring sage of Frauenburg.<sup>3</sup>

Although the position of M. Sienkiewicz in the history of literature is different from that occupied by Copernicus in the history of astronomy, the reading of his works leaves a similar impression :

<sup>1</sup> Reuschle, "Kepler und die Astronomie," Frankfurt, 1871, p. 119 : "Copernicus vir maximo ingenio et, quod in hoc exercitio magni momenti est, animo libero."

<sup>2</sup> Höffding, "Outlines of Psychology," p. 179.

<sup>3</sup> "The Problems of Astronomy," pp. 83, 84.

it is at times difficult to decide what to admire more, M. Sienkiewicz's works or the mind which produced them.

That creative imagination is needed both in the scientific and in the literary, or artistic activities of man may be easily gathered from the following statement made by Professor Karl Pearson in his well-known "Grammar of Science" (p. 30):—

There is an element in our being which is not satisfied by the formal processes of reasoning ; it is the imaginative or æsthetic side, the side to which the poets and philosophers appeal, and one which science cannot, to be scientific, disregard. We have seen that the imagination must not replace the reason in the deduction of relation and law from classified facts. But, none the less, disciplined imagination has been at the bottom of all great scientific discoveries. All great scientists have, in a certain sense, been great artists ; the man with no imagination may collect facts, but he cannot make great discoveries. If I were compelled to name the Englishmen who during our generation have had the widest imaginations and exercised them most beneficially, I think I should put the novelists and poets on one side and say Michael Faraday and Charles Darwin.

The above quotation tends to prove that it is a fallacy to think that pure intellect is, so to say, a self-supporting and self-determining factor in scientific production. But it is equally a fallacy to imagine that the intellect is genetically independent of its national milieu, "because the 'fatherland' is shown by history to be an institution necessary to the life of man, and because man is by nature a social being, and the universal com-

munity of all men has been up to now—and will be for long years yet—a pure creation of the imagination.”<sup>1</sup>

So intellectual Poland no less than literary and artistic Poland is deeply interested in this intense and peaceful civilizing work, which she needs and of which the possession of her own externally independent political form is a condition. Polish thinkers as well as Polish politicians are right when they require, not a disabled and humiliated “autonomous” Poland, fruit of somebody’s “generosity” or “benevolence,” but a Poland armed for the future, and conscious of her own strength and destiny, conscious of the civilizing part which she may play in a regenerated Europe, a Poland embodied with a spirit of national dignity and honour. Romanticism!

It is a curious thing that only the Great Powers are allowed to be romantic. The others, and especially the Poles, must refrain from it under pain of making themselves appear ridiculous.

On May 15, 1916, the papers published a statement made by Sir Edward Grey to the London representative of the *Chicago Daily News*, which closed with the following sentence, referring to the German authorities: “They do not understand that free men and free nations will rather die than submit to that ambition, and that there can be no end to war till it is defeated and renounced.”

*The Times* of June 3, 1916, in a leading article

<sup>1</sup> Le Fur, *Revue droit int. pub.*, vol. v. p. 463.

on the Jutland Naval Battle declared that this battle will steel the British people's "unalterable resolution to win this war or perish."

These declarations were received with general approbation and enthusiasm by the people.

Similar expressions of romanticism might be found in hundreds, in the countries of the Allies as well as in those of the Central Powers. Everywhere they meet with approval.

Why, then, is it only Polish romanticism that offends the ears of Europe?

Why must the Poles have preached to them the necessity of slavery when the whole world besides demands the liberty?

That is a deviation from the moral sense which it is exceedingly difficult to understand.

But as has been stated above, for intellectual Poland the question of the political independence of the country is not simply one of romanticism. It can confront a scientific and "positive" discussion.

There is a general tendency to give the Poles lessons in practical wisdom. They are constantly invited to compromise and conciliation. As to the compromise, a Polish political writer, M. Jan Dombrowski, said recently in a Polish daily, *Dziennik Petrogradzki*: "Compromise is known only by Governments and parties—the peoples ignore it."

M. Dombrowski is quite right. There are certain eternal values, certain fundamental facts on which the development of mankind is based, which cannot

be made the object of compromise or conciliation. They are, and they will ever remain, high above international congresses and diplomacy. The Poles will never understand or admit that their country and they themselves may be made the property of another nation, that there may be a foreign mortgage on their country.

It may be interesting to know the attitude the Great Powers themselves are taking towards the suggestions of compromise coming from outside on matters which they consider of vital importance to their countries.

Here is a quotation which speaks for itself:—

In the meantime the British people and their Allies would look upon suggestions of compromise, however friendly, and from whatever quarter they came, very much as President Lincoln and Mr. Seward looked upon them in the Civil War. The American records of that period afford the classic instance of how a great democracy fighting for its life, and for what it prizes more than life, meets even the hint of interference from outside. Neutrals cannot be too tender of the susceptibilities of belligerents when they undertake to criticize their political action.<sup>1</sup>

As to the necessity of being practical—i.e. of not abandoning such aims as are unrealizable under given conditions—the Poles, even if their realism were not subordinated to some higher ideals which make life worth living, ought not to be unnecessarily moderate in their judgment of what is realizable and what is not. History shows that

<sup>1</sup> *The Times*, May 27, 1916, "The HOLLOWNESS of PEACE TALK."

man's capacity to forecast the future is still very limited and there is no power so strong as the will. What is sometimes called by the high-sounding name "political realism" is often nothing more than lack of foresight, which may be fatally disastrous to those who carry it too far.

Of the fact that neither individuals nor countries can foresee the future this war has given ample evidence. It has given many evidences to the Poles also.

"When a man feels himself bereft of all protection, when he can reckon no longer on either friendship, or justice, or pity, there is nevertheless one feeling that remains—that is hope. Hope alone is adequate to defend him against despair. Hope alone possesses the power of administering the last unction to his dying lips. It is hope, too, this good, sympathetic, and faithful source of consolation, which irradiates the image—far off, and yet so near—of our dear University—a hope which by its very presence brings comfort to our soul."

These were the words with which M. Alexander Swietochowski concluded his oration in 1903, when he met the former students of the Polish University of Warsaw ("Szkola Główna"), which had been closed in 1867.

What do such words as these prove if not that in 1903 the chances of the restoration of the Polish University of Warsaw were so remote that it was necessary for Swietochowski to impress on his colleagues their bounden duty to keep on hoping?

For, as Casanova once emphasized, despair is a form of suicide, and then, as Cr  billon added, there is nothing left but shame.

Truly, the outlook was most unpromising!

What was an impossibility even so recently as 1903 has become to-day a solid reality: the Polish University at Warsaw was resuscitated in November of last year.

Such an example, precarious as it may appear, so long as the Poles have no effective power to administer their own affairs, so long as a Polish State is not a living reality, must strengthen the Poles in the belief that they must never give up the idea of national independence. There is every reason to think that the Poles will never give up this ideal, and that it may one day be realized, because, as Lord Weardale said: "The Polish race has many gifts, but perhaps its enduring faith is its most remarkable characteristic."<sup>1</sup>

The faithfulness of the Poles to the idea of independence will prevent them from one day deserving to have said of them what Montesquieu said about Rome:—

When Sylla wished to give back Rome her freedom she could not take it—nothing but the shadow of her virtue remained; . . . she fell deeper and deeper into slavery<sup>2</sup>;

<sup>1</sup> "Poland's Struggle for Independence," by Kucharski. With an Introduction by Lord Weardale.

<sup>2</sup> "Esprit des Lois," iii. 3: "Quand Sylla voulut rendre ´a Rome sa libert   elle ne put plus la recevoir, elle n'avait plus qu'un faible reste de vertu; . . . elle fut toujours plus esclave."

or what Tetmajer, a Polish poet, said about illustrious Greece :—

The soldier alone is the defender of the honour of an enslaved nation. When Ancient Greece was occupied by the Romans she continued to give to the world thinkers, philosophers, and artists, but this in no way prevented the Romans from despising her. In contempt perished the nation which yet was—as the Romans themselves recognized—in the highest rank of intelligence in the world of her time, which was able to impose her own tongue upon her conquerors as an auxiliary language and a model to the learned circles and the intellectual classes of the Roman people.

The Poles really feel that if they give up the ideal of independence they will very rapidly cease to be a united although partitioned nation, that they will lose their individuality and therefore the possibility of active participation in the higher forms of expression of the spiritual as opposed to the merely material life, that they will abase themselves morally, and will deserve the contempt of all the honest and dishonest world. And in so thinking the Poles are undoubtedly right, because, psychologically speaking, the idea of national dignity plays the same part in the life of a nation as the idea of self-respect in the moral consciousness of the individual, although it is less evident.

If the object is to preserve and develop the personality as a whole, you cannot sacrifice these sentiments with impunity without harming the individual or the social organism in which they occupy a central position.

Modern social psychology is ready, we think,

to acknowledge this truth, and it is to be expected that the Western democracies will not show themselves incapable of understanding what vital and profound meaning there is in faithfulness to the ideal of national independence in the case of an enslaved, but not degraded, nation, in the case of a nationality which desires to keep itself distinct and united in the midst of other peoples.

Was it not a great English poet and philosopher, Pope, who said : "Let fortune do her worst whatever she makes us lose, as long as she never makes us lose our honesty and our independence"? And was it not a French humanist, Guérout, who proclaimed : "Toutes les fois que la France est infidèle à une noble cause, elle s'appauvrit et se dégrade"?

The truth contained in these words is deeply rooted in the convictions of Polish patriots. And when the German Chancellor, Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg, included the following sentence in his speech in the Reichstag on the 19th of August last, after the fall of Warsaw :—

For centuries geographical and political fate have forced the Germans and Poles to fight against each other. The recollection of these old differences does not diminish respect for the passion of patriotism and tenacity with which the Polish people defends its old Western civilization and its love of independence in the severe sufferings from Russoism, a love which is maintained also through the misfortune of this war—

he knew perfectly well that from a Polish point of view he was paying the Poles the greatest tribute they could crave for themselves. He knew, too,

that he would strike the most tender chord in the Polish soul.

Whatever comment may be made on the sincerity of the Chancellor's words, it must, at least, be admitted that in this case, as in many other circumstances, Germany has proved to be "well informed" about Polish aims and Polish political aspirations.

In this war the Poles have no other means of asserting their imprescriptable right to the independence they claim, except through the pen and the spoken word, and even that much is often denied them.

If this right is not given to them in the next Peace Congress, from which the optimists hope will ensue a regenerated Europe, there will be only one thing left for them to do: to struggle on until the final victory, for, as Staszyc, a great Polish patriot, said after the partitions: "A great nation may fall, only a vile nation can perish."



THIS BOOK IS DUE ON THE LAST DATE  
STAMPED BELOW

AN INITIAL FINE OF 25 CENTS  
WILL BE ASSESSED FOR FAILURE TO RETURN  
THIS BOOK ON THE DATE DUE. THE PENALTY  
WILL INCREASE TO 50 CENTS ON THE FOURTH  
DAY AND TO \$1.00 ON THE SEVENTH DAY  
OVERDUE.

APR 17 1942	51M
DEC 2 1945	REC'D LD
DEC 4 1945	MAY 11 '65 - 12 M
21 Dec '48 AP	
26 May '57 TB	
REC'D LD	
MAY 21 1957	
APR 3 '65 118	
REC'D LD	
APR 3 '65 - 1 PM	
	LD 21-100m-7, '39 (402s)

for  
use in

## LIBRARY USE

RETURN TO DESK FROM WHICH BORROWED

## LOAN DEPT.

THIS BOOK IS DUE BEFORE CLOSING TIME  
ON LAST DATE STAMPED BELOW

LIBRARY USE  
20 '65

REC'D LD

MAY 11 '65 - 12 M

LD 62A-50m-2,'64  
(E3494s10)9412A

General Library  
University of California  
Berkeley

